THE WIND and the RAIN

Vol. 6

1949-1950

LONDON

KRAUS REPRINT

Nendeln, Liechtenstein

1969

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KRAUS REPRINT
a Division of
KRAUS-THOMSON ORGANIZATION LIMITED
Nendeln, Liechtenstein
1969
Printed in Switzerland

THE WIND AND THE RAIN

Founded by Michael Allmand

EDITED BY NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

D. C. RICE
GORDON SYMES
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ROBIN ATTHILL
KIERKEGAARD
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WALTER LOWRIE
MARTIN TURNELL
MARGARET BOTTRALL
CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

SUMMER, 1949
Volume VI Number I

THE MONTH

AUGUST. 1949

COMPASSION

A Story

Evelyn Waugh

LATER NUMBERS

this year contain

MODERN PAINTING

John Rothens ein

REGIONALISM IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Seán O'Faoláin

NIETZSCHE MYSTIQUE

Henri de Lubac

and contributions by

Christopher Sykes, J. F. Powers, Thomas Merton, Derek Hill, John Guest, etc.

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THE MERIDIAN PRESS LTD.,
27 BRAZENNOSE ST., MANCHESTER 2

THE WIND AND THE RAIN

Edited by NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

VOLUME VI SUMMER, 194_ NUMBER 1

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THE WIND AND THE RAIN is published quarterly in January, April, July and October, by the Phœnix Press, and edited from 47, Earls Court Road, London, W.8 (Western 2928). Subscription rates are £10 for life, or 8s. 6d. per annum. In U.S.A. copies may be bought direct from Universal Distributors Company, 38 Union Square, New York, 3, and other American agents. In Europe subscriptions may be placed with leading booksellers. Back numbers and advertisement rates may be obtained on application. All manuscripts submitted must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, if their return is desired. Young writers are welcomed, and a verdict on all work is given within a month.

PICCADILLY AND PARNASSUS

An Editorial Interlude

NEPTUNE defend us—it seems that on occasion at every turn memory will deceive us; and such was the case that hot, sweltering night in July. For somehow it appeared as if all the street lamps were spaced further apart than usual—or could it be that the excellent pre-phylloxera port which had followed dinner was taking effect? At the time, it would have been difficult to say: there were so many conflicting thoughts crowding in that it was hard to distinguish one from the other, let alone to say precisely where one began and the other ended. For instance, there were memories of an old Florentine restaurant with its beer mats inscribed *Nettuno del mare—Dio Divino—lodava l'acqua—ma preferiva il vino*; and memories of the great Heidelberg burgomaster's vat of the seventeenth century, wide enough for a hundred people to dance upon it: again, there was a feeling that somebody was impatient—ah! it was the cab driver waiting to be paid (cab drivers perpetually appear to be waiting to be paid!); and there was a yet vaguer feeling that a summer number of a quarterly had to be assembled in the morning, and, worse still, an editorial leader written by noon. Not far from the Café Royal, with such thoughts, it was as if memory suspended one between Parnassus and Piccadilly; and which should it be? Then a voice broke in: 'Why not come and smoke an Egyptian cigarette? I have some joss-sticks kindling upstairs in a private room'. Without a doubt—Bacchus be a witness—the stiff brandies of the earlier part of the evening were taking their toll. Once more the voice broke in: 'Your name?', and before waiting for a reply, went on: 'Mine's Harland, Henry Harland. I am bringing out *The Yellow Book* next month'. Memory came back: it was 1894—or was it? was it 1849 or 1949?—was it some dreadful printers' error which had been passed unnoticed? Bacchus and Neptune, let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments. . . .

Upstairs, in a vaulted room, on a settee lay a copy of *An Ideal Husband;* the copy was turned down; the thin tremor of a pencil's mark could be discerned beside the lines—Questions are never indiscreet: answers sometimes are. The lines seemed both a warning and an invitation, and they recalled how earlier in that day an article had come in studying the contribution of Lord Keynes to economic science: the article had been prefaced with an epigraph from Emerson—We need the courage to ask questions: the courage to expose ignorance. Well, Emerson be a protector. There was nothing for it now but to go through with the interview. Harland seated himself opposite.

'Tell me, my boy,' he said, 'Why is landscape painting so much

more attractive than nature? Or more seriously, tell me what you think of us? We of the 'Nineties, did we set you an example for the future, or were we merely a set of Decadents, as so many—after the event—have christened us?' He put his finger to his lips. 'Please be good enough not to interrupt for the minute. Let us take the case of Beardsley—or young Master Danby Weirdsley as old Mr. Punch preferred to call him. If I go to your *Cambridge History of Literature* I find him noted for his 'decadent decorations'. I think the charge is just—at least in an isolated and restricted sense: but what I object to, what I protest against most vehemently, is the labelling of a whole school as finally and irretrievably decadent: the term when so extended becomes preposterous and meaningless, even if the proviso is added that the term is extended only to one half of the period's writers: in short, in particular to the contributors to *The Yellow Book*. You see, you must remember that in my position it is my privilege to have seen the future as it became present up to this moment; I am not a seer, but I have learnt that when we dead awaken after our funerals, we realize that we have never lived. That perhaps is why since 1905 I have been so full of other people's quotations.'

One of the candles standing in a tall ormolu Empire candlestick on the table winked and went out.

'In 1889 you may recollect,' he continued, 'that when John Lane went into partnership with Elkin Mathews he was looking for talent, and talent is never so prodigally rich as it seems at the time. How truly Lane knew this! However, he had seen one of Beardsley's drawings for Wilde's *Salome* and he was sure of his judgement. Here was the ideal art editor for *The Yellow Book*, and so we all three became associated. But the point that interests me—and again I beg you to remember that in my section of the hemisphere time is of no matter—the point that interests me is the interpretation which later critics have given to Beardsley's drawings. I will grant you that they are artificial and highly stylized—like his prose; his strange wines that were cooled in buckets of snow, his fans that waved like big living moths. I will grant you that they titillate naughtiness, that they hint at rather than suggest vice; that the flesh which he draws (despite the outward austerity imposed by the black and white) is soft and voluptuous, but would, one suspects, if tasted prove to be as artificial as velvet. All this and more is true and can be applied to other æsthetes of the period. Yet one must remember if Dowson was a poet of the same decade, so was Kipling. Arthur Machen's most notable novel *The Great God Pan* was a novel of the 'Nineties, but so was Wells' *Time Machine*. If Max was our best essayist and Beerbohm your most distinguished broadcaster, so was Shaw one of our most promising essayists. And talking of Shaw, what of the Fabian Essays he wrote and edited?—for example the Fabian volume of 1889 which he opened with the sentence—All economic analyses begin with the cultivation of the earth. By the way, what about a

pear? They are on the table and they are out of season. Take one—do. Which reminds me. I should explain that if time is of no matter to me from where I come, all literature has become one to me. It is my prerogative no longer to read what is written, but to know. . . . Oh! If only I were a reviewer. . . .'

The candle in the other ormolu Empire candlestick winked, but did not go out.

'To hark back to an earlier observation,' Harland added, 'I said then that I objected—nay, I believe I said I protested vehemently—to the complete labelling of a group of writers as decadent. I do. Admittedly there were decadent elements in various sections of the æsthetic movement—notably, I confess, amongst those who contributed to my own *Yellow Book* and later to the *Savoy*. Yet these writers were in a sense prophetic: I include Richard Le Gallienne, Ela D'Arcy, Theo Marzials, John Davidson, Olive Custance, Hubert Crackenthorpe—to mention but a less-remembered handful. It is true they may not have been so socially conscious as Shaw, the Webbs, Graham Wallas, Annie Besant and Hubert Bland, but their mission as artists, even as the adherents of æstheticism, was none the less a prophetic mission. To what extent they were aware of their responsibility is here beside the point. Instead, what is important, is the realization that the Decadents, in their attempt to shock the conventions of Victorian smugness, in their attempt to rip the antimacassars from the chairs, in their attempt to liberate themselves, at the same time brought themselves face to face with sin in the choice of good and evil. But excuse me, dear boy. I see you have something to say. Pray do, but first allow me to offer you another Egyptian cigarette?'

'I have and it is this, Sir. If I understand you aright, what you are suggesting is that all your writers insofar as they were artists were in rebellion: rebellion of two different types. You mentioned the Fabians and declared their rebellion was primarily social: you mentioned the Decadents, your own circle of contributors, and said they were out to shock. Well, in literature, to shock is very nearly the same thing as to rebel: often one stage only proceeds the other, and in some cases the two processes become synonymous—I am reminded of Shavian wit during its middle period. But there is a decided difference between the Decadents and Fabians, and I would submit, Sir, that the difference lies in the fact that whereas the Fabians were out after a paradise on earth and in the quest either forgot (or ignored) Original Sin, the Decadents were out for another form of paradise on earth which brought them face to face with sin. The Wilde trial did that if nothing else did—but I anticipate the argument. . . .

'The Fabians wanted an extension of the suffrage, more baths, better housing conditions, a greater concentration on the human rights of the working classes—their interests, it has been said, were plebeian. On the other hand, the Decadents took society as it was, even if their orientation was often too strictly patrician to avoid the charge of being called socially irresponsible.

'Recently I have been reading George Moore's tale of the Lovers of Orelay and two points struck me which I think may have an incidental bearing here. In the first place, the author has just paused to note how if Menelaus' wife had not been unfaithful to him, the world would have been the poorer for the *Odyssey* and *Illiad*. Moore then exclaims—Dear me, one must admit that art owes a great deal to adultery. Children are born of the marriage, stories of the adulterous bed, and the world needs both, stories as well as children. The other comment comes later in the story. Let me read it to you, for I have copied it out since to-morrow I had intended using it in an article which I must write. Here it is: 'At the bottom of his heart every Christian feels, though he may not care to admit it in these modern days, that every attempt to make love a beautiful and pleasurable thing is a return to paganism'. As a Christian I do not believe such is the case, although if I am honest I am forced to admit that in many cases the charge is all too true. Now my reason for selecting these two comments is because they seem to me to throw a considerable light on the Decadents' method chosen to shock readers. Like much of Gautier's earlier *Mademoiselle de Maupin,* the comments are impudently pagan. But shocking as such sentiments must have sounded to those whose lacteal diet was chosen weekly at Mudie's Library, to my generation (at least that is for somebody born in the early 'Twenties) in the light of atomic war and artificial insemination they seem comparatively mild sentiments. On the contrary, Sir, what does interest me is the fact that such shock tactics should have been primarily aimed at religion: in fact religion being their main target, I find it doubly interesting since it seems but another example of the way in which religion and literature can never be wholly divorced; literature can be hostile to religion, it can mock religion, but it can never be divorced from it. Of course, I do not wish to suggest that literature cannot thrive when it is opposed to religion: that would be nonsense—and besides literature as such can only be assessed by literary standards. On the other hand the greatness of literature is another matter: there it cannot solely be assessed by literary standards, for all art is essentially moral and demands ultimately a moral judgement. Retrospective judgements must necessarily imply canons of criteria other than those which are purely literary. . . .

'Now if I have digressed, it is to this purpose, Sir. You will remember that earlier I hinted that in the Decadents' attempt to shock there was an element of rebellion against Victorian smugness: well, rebellion of a minor order it was, but it was a rebellion against the state of man, not his nature; vice may have been worshipped at the altar of decadence, but it was worshipped because it was evil and known as sin. There was no attempt to explain sin away in psychological terms and thus banish guilt. I can resist everything but temptation—and half the enjoyment of temptation was that it gave one a secret feeling of guilt. Little did poor Oscar Wilde know

the tragic repercussions that were to flow out of that epigram, for, as I see it, the 'Nineties never really recovered from his trial.

'Indeed if at this stage of the argument a paradox may be ventured, I would venture to say that the Decadents for all their æstheticism had their feet planted much more firmly on the ground than the Fabians. At least the Decadents accepted man as he was—a fascinating but fallen creature who could sometimes laugh and revel in his own fall. For them no Fabian society with homes for all: their demand was more modest—merely a desire to be a visitor at all the fashionable homes in London society. Again the Decadents may have been unsocial in a broad sense, somewhat irresponsible, but their heirs at the turn of the century did not fall victims to the brand of optimistic Christianity which swept the rest of the country. They never fell victims to the fallacy of man as the measure of all things, as sufficient to himself, and later on only sufficient to himself if he has filled in the right forms and paid his insurance dues. Unlike so many who have followed after, they realized that it is important first to wash behind one's ears before one preaches from a soap-box. In fact looking back on the 'Nineties, I would like to ask you, Sir . . .'

Harland stayed the question. He said: 'I see it is nearly midnight and I have only one observation at such an hour to proffer: a carriage awaits me at the door'. Saying that he reached for his cloak, donned it, swung his stick, bowed, and in a trice was gone. In the distance a hansom could be heard rumbling away, whilst at the same time outside, clearly but distinctly, could be heard a solitary clock striking thirteen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgements are here made to the National Broadcasting Company of America for permission to include Mr. W. H. Auden's 'Note on Graham Greene' which was originally relayed in the United States in conjunction with a radio adaptation of *The Ministry of Fear*: also to Mrs. Margaret Bottrall for permission to include a chapter from her forthcoming book on Blake, *The Divine Image,* which will be published by the Phœnix Press. Unfortunately, owing to lack of space, selected notices of *Raintree County* by Ross Lockridge (Macdonald, 15s.), *The Naked and the Dead* by Norman Mailer (Wingate, 15s.) and *Intruder in the Dust* by William Faulkner (Chatto and Windus, 9s. 6d.) have been held over until the Autumn.

From the autumn onwards it is proposed to sponsor a series of monthly lectures under the auspices of *The Wind and the Rain.* The opening lecture by The Editor on 'The Function of Little Reviews' will be given on Monday, September 12th: the second lecture by Mr. Hermann Peschmann on 'The Work of Edith Sitwell' will be given on Monday, October 17th. Other lectures will include Mr. S. Gorley Putt on 'The Novels of Henry James', Professor W. F. Jackson Knight on 'Vergilian Man', and Mr. Francis King on 'Baroque Poetry and Richard Crawshaw'. The time and venue of these lectures will be announced later: in the meantime those interested are asked to send their names and addresses so that they may be notified in due course. All readers of this review will be particularly welcome.

II. TRADITION AND INHERITANCE

Memories of a Victorian Childhood

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

II. Return to the North

IN 1896 my father left the army and we went to live in Yorkshire where he had built a house on a hill above the river Wharfe at Hartlington, which he had inherited only a few years before from his grandfather who had lived to be nearly ninety-nine. This meant a complete break with our social background and our immediate past, for though my family had kept their land in Yorkshire, they had left Craven for Southern England in the middle of the eighteenth century and had inter-married for two successive generations with wives of French Huguenot families—Regis and Aufrère—both of them women of strong personality who left their mark, both physically and spiritually, on the family. Thus we had not much Yorkshireness left by the time we returned, and my father's choice was due to a conscious desire to recover contact with lost family traditions, for this was the age of Maurice Barrès and the reaction against the rootlessness of nineteenth century culture.

In the eighteenth century, before the industrial revolution had begun, our family had abandoned their home in the remote Yorkshire dales for the urbanized south. They had bought a house in Windsor Forest which Wyatt rebuilt for them in his neo-Gothic fashion. Now at the end of the nineteenth century when the urban revolution was almost completed my father left the South to return to his native country. He loved building, and planting and planning, and the making of Hartlington occupied him for years, so that he did not feel the lack of society. I think my mother felt this social isolation more, and was often homesick for Wales and the closely-integrated family society of Hay and the Welsh border.

For me this return to the North seemed no less of an adventure than if we had gone to a new country. Indeed, Yorkshire was a new world and the whole aspect of the country with the stone walls climbing the hills and the naked rock thrusting itself out in great scars and promontories, like sea cliffs, was entirely unlike anything I had seen before. Even the houses with their grey stone walls and roofs were different, and I could hardly understand the northern speech which was then far more strongly differentiated from southern English than it is to-day. In fact there are few districts in England that preserved their regional individuality more strongly than Craven. In the past it had been a kind of island, separated from both Yorkshire and Lancashire by a ring of forests—the forests of Trawdon

and Rossendale to the south, Knaresborough Forest to the east, the Forest of Bowland to the west and Stainmoor Forest to the north.

Even to-day, if one goes north along the line of the Pennines one cannot fail to be struck by the abruptness of the contrast. For forty or fifty miles one sees nothing but the sullen black barren moors that divide the most thickly-peopled regions of England, and suddenly one comes into a new country in which the earth and sky have a different colour: white cliffs after black stones, open pastoral country covered with bright green grass, like that of the downs, after the dark peat mosses and heather. This limestone country goes on for twenty or thirty miles to the head of the dales and the summits of Ingleborough and Pennyghent and then the moors close in again and we come to the desolate highlands of Mallerstang and Stainmoor Forest.

Our house was built where the two countries meet—on one side, the dark fells, on the other the green hills. It stood on a glacial moraine thrust out into the valley of the Wharfe, falling steeply on two sides to the main valley and to a tributary stream which had cut a deep ravine through the limestone rocks. The sound of falling water was always present as a gentle murmur in summer and rising to a thunderous roar in the winter floods when the hill seemed to vibrate like a taut string. There is something about running water that appeals to a child's mind, even when it is no more than the trickle of a brook, and a mountain torrent in full flood gave me a sense of irresistible power like nothing else I ever experienced. I got to know that stream in all its moods. It was as real an influence on mind and heart as any person, and how much more satisfying to the child's view of reality than the artificial and restricted reality of the grown-up world! On summer days the brown waters giggling and chattering among the rocks were a constant companion and friend, but better still were the days of sudden storm, when it was changed into a roaring torrent, rising foot by foot and hour by hour until the whole appearance of the valley was transformed. I think these early impressions of the elemental force of nature have a great importance in one's education, and it seems to me a misfortune for the children of our own time that instead of such psychologically manageable natural forces they have had to face the inhuman elemental force of man's own destructiveness in the force of high explosives and incendiaries.

Moreover this love of the river had a certain literary and religious significance. For it was in the Old Testament, and there only, that I found these things written about, and it seemed clear to me that in those days they felt about these things as I did. 'Deep calleth to deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts', 'Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together.' 'The River of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river the river Kishon, O my soul thou hast trodden down strength.' 'The glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream.' Such things compensated me for the boredom of so much that seemed dull or incomprehensible in the long Anglican office and made me feel that religion was not simply concerned with

the pious moralities which held such a prominent place in Victorian books for children, but stood close to that wonderful non-human world of the river and the mountain which I found around me.

Behind the house the stream ran back for miles into the hills, entirely solitary, without road or house, sometimes narrowing to a deep chasm between the rocks and then widening again to a wooded valley. At one point, about a mile upstream where the valley changed its direction and turned north, there was a deserted lead mine with lateral shafts driven into the hillside. Here one could sit on a stone platform high up on the hillside looking down on the treetops two hundred feet below and see the whole extent of the solitary valley, running up on the right to the high moors backed by the heavy mass of Great Whernside where the snow lay far into the spring and sometimes even the early summer. The greater part of Craven is covered with these deserted mines which were still flourishing in mid-Victorian times when England was the chief lead-producing country in the world, but now towards the end of the century they were all abandoned and their remains increased the loneliness of the country. The larger mines on Greenhow Hill and Grassington Moor which had employed hundreds of miners always gave me a sinister feeling of ruin and desolation, but this was not at all the case with the small outlying mines on the limestone hills which had been taken back into the landscape like prehistoric remains of remote antiquity.

These relics of the recent past accentuated the contrast between Craven and the industrial West Riding. A hundred years ago Craven had had its mines and its factories—small cotton and silk mills run by water power in almost every village down the dales. Now all this had gone and the population was much smaller than it had been at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Yet this did not give one any impression of destruction and social decay. On the contrary, Craven seemed a far more thriving and prosperous society than that of Wales or the agricultural south. No doubt this was mainly due to the absence of an agricultural proletariat. There was no class of agricultural labourers. For the farm servant or hind was a part of the household and often himself a farmer's son. I remember one farmer whose cousin would arrive every year on his own horse and work for several months, like James Pigg and his cousin Deavilboger in *Handley Cross*.

The whole social structure of Craven was, in fact, quite different from that of the other three parts of England that I had known. It was more democratic and more archaic. There was no squirearchy, except in the south western parts towards Lancashire which differed in many respects from the dales that were the heart of Craven. Here society still showed traces of its medieval pattern, when there was nothing between the lords of the great feudal and monastic estates and the peasants. In the Middle Ages Craven was divided between the Percys and the Cliffords; and their heirs, Lord Hothfield and the Duke of Devonshire, still hold the remains of their estates at Skipton

and Bolton. But apart from these there were never any large unified estates as in the rest of England. The fall of the monasteries was a real social revolution which was bitterly opposed by the dalespeople who took a considerable part in the Pilgrimage of Grace. But it was followed not by the rise of a wealthy class of landowners, as in the rest of England, but by the development of a large yeoman class, like the 'statesmen' of Westmorland and Cumberland where the conditions were closely similar. Some of these yeoman families prospered, some declined, many died out, so that in my time Craven had become mainly a country of tenant farmers, who yet preserved much of the essential character of the old yeoman class.

The history of this development is of far more than local significance, for it throws light on some of the most characteristic features of the English class system, above all its stability and its fluidity, which are the paradoxical key to English history.

On the one hand there are ancient families which remain peasant farmers as they were in the Middle Ages, on the other there are families that rose very fast and very far in the age between the fall of the monasteries and the Civil War. The most remarkable example of this was the family which has taken its name and title from Craven and which derived its origin from the next hamlet to Hartlington. The founder of this family, William Craven, was a parish apprentice who went to London in the days of Queen Elizabeth and eventually became Lord Mayor. But his son, the first Earl, was not content to found a family, like so many 'new men' of his generation. This tradesman's son who was despised by the sophisticated courtiers of the Restoration, maintained almost to the end of the seventeenth century the antiquated ideals of medieval chivalry, devoting his sword and his wealth to the distinterested service of Elizabeth of Bohemia, and at the end of his life as officer in command of the Guards at Whitehall he was one of the few men who stood fast in his loyalty amidst the general tide of treachery and demoralization of 1688.

The same tendency to revert to an archaic social tradition is to be seen at the other end of the social scale in Lady Anne Clifford, the last of her race, who was one of the most remarkable women of the seventeenth century England. In spite of her real intelligence and strength of character, her life was spent in the attempt to preserve the old feudal way of life in the age of Cromwell and Charles II. Her married life had been an unhappy one. 'The marble pillars of Knowle and Wilton', she writes, 'were to me oftentimes but the gay arbours of anguish, insomuch that a wise man who knew the inside of my fortune would often say that I lived in both these my lords great families as the River Roan or Rodanus runs through the Lake of Geneva without mingling any part of its stream with that lake.'

And so, as soon as the Civil War ended, she shook the dust of London and Wiltshire off her feet and went back to her Northern lands which she had not seen for nearly fifty years. While England as

a whole was going through the novel experience of a revolutionary dictatorship, Lady Anne Clifford was carrying out a revolution in the opposite direction, re-asserting her feudal rights as Lady of the Honour of Skipton and hereditary High Sheriff of Westmorland, restoring her six castles of Skipton, Appleby, Barden, Brougham, Brough-under-Stainmoor and Pendragon-in-Mallerstang, and going on progress in a horse litter from castle to castle over 'these mountainous and almost impassible ways' that separated Craven from Westmorland.

The strange thing is that there is no evidence of any conflict between her and the other great personality of seventeenth century Craven—General John Lambert, who ruled the North under Cromwell and who lived only a few miles from Skipton Castle which he had besieged and dismantled during the civil war. Nor did her re-assertion of feudal rights bring her into serious conflict with the yeomanry. Indeed there can be little doubt that they admired her as the embodiment of the old way of life which was so profoundly different from that of the new aristocracy. For Lady Anne was a woman of intense piety after the medieval fashion—a restorer of churches as well as castles, averse from personal indulgence, bringing the poor to eat at her own table and often spending her days, as a contemporary records, among her sisters at the almshouses at Bolton and Appleby, 'like an abbess among her nuns'. But though her attempt to restore medieval social order was as hopeless as King Uther's legendary attempt to change the course of the Eden at Pendragon Castle,[1] it was undoubtedly one of the factors which helped to maintain the distinctive social character of the region, for it checked the formation of a squirearchy, though it did little to interfere with the rise of the yeoman class.

The seventeenth century was in fact the great age of the yeomanry in Craven, and all over the country one can still see the homes of the new landowners, solid, well-proportioned farm houses and halls with the initials of their owners over the doors together with the date, which usually belongs to the middle decades of the century. The early history of my own family belongs to this development. In the sixteenth century Christopher Dawson (I) was a tenant of the Cliffords at Halton Gill and Foxup at the very head of Littondale. His grandson Christopher (II) in 1641 built the old Hall which is now the farmhouse at Halton Gill, while another grandson who was also named Christopher (III) built the house at Knight Stainforth in Ribblesdale which bears his initials and the date 1649. The son of Christopher II of Halton Gill, Josias, acquired Langcliffe Hall at Settle and it was his son, Christopher (IV) who first came to Hartlington in consequence of his marriage to Margaret Craven of Apple-

[1] This is a local Westmorland legend, recorded by The Revd. W. Nicholls, in his *History of Mallerstang Forest* (1883).

Let Uther Pendragon do all he can
Eden will run where Eden ran.

trewick, whose elder sister Mary was the wife of Sir Edmund Andros, the first governor of New York. Their son, William Dawson, spent his long and prosperous life at Settle and Langcliffe, but his eldest son Christopher (V) inherited the estates of his mother's family, the Pudseys, and became the squire of Bolton by Bowland in the south western corner of Craven, while his son by his second marriage with Elizabeth Marsden of Gisburn, William II, who inherited Hartlington, went south to seek his fortunes and was the ancestor of my own branch of the family.

This genealogical excursion shows how my family was continually moving up and down the dales and eventually outside Craven altogether. Nor was this by any means unusual among the old yeoman families in Craven. It was characteristic of the whole population, from the more important families like the Cravens and the Franklands down to the tenant farmers themselves who were not so closely united to the village community as in the agricultural south. Indeed the real social unit was not the village or manor but the dale or the region, so that Craven as a whole possessed a greater degree of social unity and stability and tradition than any district of England that I have known. This was no doubt largely due to its remoteness which had made it almost inaccessible before the coming of the motor bus. The old vicar of Arncliffe, Archdeacon Boyd, who died just before I first knew the country, has recorded how when he went to York to be instituted, the Archbishop had said 'Arncliffe! Arncliffe! I have no such living in my diocese, Sir'. And when he set out by way of Ripon and asked for a conveyance to drive to his new cure nobody at the inn knew where it was or how it could be reached. Finally he found a man who said he knew 'a famous big rock called Kilnsey Crag' and he fancied 'Arncliffe was near that'; it was only after spending the night at Kilnsey that he finally reached his destination and when he got there he found the vicarage was being used by the farmers as a store house for wool. Thus in Craven, eighteenth century conditions were prolonged far into the Victorian age. Indeed even in our own parish of Burnsall, which was relatively accessible, the old type of yeoman parson which had long disappeared elsewhere survived as late as the 'forties.

In this respect Craven was very different from the other parts of England that I had known where the Anglican Church had held a position of undisputed social and cultural leadership. Yet it had not always been so. The fragments of the Anglian high crosses and the ruins of the great northern abbeys recalled the times when the Church had been more of a power here than in most parts of England. Nowhere was the destruction of the monasteries more bitterly resented than in Craven. Ever since the days of St. Cuthbert and St. Wilfred, save for the period of the Danish conquest, the great abbeys had dominated the spiritual and economic life of Northern England, and when the Commons rose in 1536 in defence of this inheritance of nine hundred years under the banners of St. Cuthbert and the Five

Wounds, it was the most spontaneous popular movement ever known in the north.

The fall of the abbeys left a gap in northern culture which was never filled either by the Church of England or the Nonconformists and the attempt of the new yeoman class to fill it by the foundation of the village grammar schools that are a characteristic feature of Craven[2] was but a superficial solution.

But the ruins of the deserted monasteries remained, and Bolton Priory, which lies a few miles from Hartlington down the Wharfe, always seemed to me the perfect embodiment of this lost element in the northern culture—a spiritual grace which had once been part of our social tradition and which still survived as a ghostly power brooding over the river and the hills. In those days we used to travel to Craven by way of Bolton so that the abbey (as we called it[3]) was the first thing we saw on coming and the last on leaving. When we came to the brow above the river on the north where the Victorian Gothic monument stands to the Cavendish who was assassinated at Dublin in 1882, the carriage used to stop so that we could look down on the abbey lying in the arm of the Wharfe beneath the guarding hills—hills not high enough to dwarf it but which none the less, as Ruskin said, convey an indefinable sense of 'the strength and greatness of this wild northern land'.

This was my earliest impression of Craven and it still remains with me as a true expression of the *genius loci* which has survived the religious revolution of the sixteenth century and the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. For it is not a mere romantic imagination to believe that a land may possess latent powers which are not always manifested or exhausted by their actual social state. In the south and in many of the lowland areas of the continent, one often feels that nature has been so completely tamed and made to serve the purposes of society that it no longer exists except as a part of the life of man. There are other regions, like those barren moorlands between Lancashire and Yorkshire, which remain untameable and hostile to man, so that man can only assert himself as an alien power, cutting across the grain of the country with his towns and railways and factories. But in regions like Craven nature and man exist as independent but not unfriendly powers, so that there is a vital tension between them out of which something new may be created. I have been told that the same thing is true of the dales country in Sweden—Dalarne—which was the heart of the national tradition. It is certainly true also of the Four Forest Cantons of

[2] The grammar school at Burnsall was founded by the first Sir William Craven in 1602, that at Bolton by Robert Boyle, the chemist, in 1700 and that at Theshfield a few miles beyond Burnsall by a seventeenth century rector, Matthew Hewett. These dales schools were probably similar to the one Wordsworth attended at Hawkshead rather than to Mr. Squeers' Academy at Bowes.

[3] It was really a priory of Austen Canons, like Bridlington and Nostell.

Switzerland. But these regions achieved their cultural expressions centuries ago, whereas Craven has been too small and too poor to have a history of its own. To-day it has been taken into the orbit of the great industrial cities as their playground, if not their suburb. But in my childhood it still lived its own life and one felt the presence of the towns chiefly by the darkness that would come when a wind brought up the drifting smoke clouds high above the hills from the south.

Altogether it was a solitary life—rich in mental associations and impressions but poor in social relations. This did not trouble my father who had a natural taste for solitude, and always looked back with pleasure to the years he had spent as British representative of the International Circumpolar expedition of 1882-3 at a post in the far north of Canada. As I said in the first part of these notes he was far from being a typical soldier nor did he share the ordinary tastes of a country gentleman. He never shot or fished or hunted, nor did he suffer fools gladly. He had always been a great reader, and when he retired from the army he was able to indulge his taste for books to the full. I do not think I have ever known anyone who had more catholic tastes, for he was equally interested in modern science and ancient philosophy, medieval mysticism and modern history, Victorian novels and classical poetry. He had left Harrow early for the army crammer and Woolwich so that he was largely self-educated in literary matters, with no German and but little Greek. On the other hand he was devoted to the Italian classics, above all to Machiavelli and Dante, and most of all the last. Even when he was still in the army, he had acquired the great Berlin edition of Botticelli's Dante drawings in three immense volumes which no bookcase could hold, and which impressed my childish imagination as the largest books in the world. His admiration for Dante had no limits, he rated him far above Shakespeare and Milton as the world's one perfect poet. This love of Dante no doubt stimulated his interest in Catholicism and helped to dispel the Protestant prejudices of his upbringing. It was certainly by Dante that he had come to know St. Thomas. But though he had a copy of the *Summa Theologica,* he did not read it in the assiduous way he read Plato and Berkeley and the Roman Stoics. His Catholic sympathies were, however, religious as well as intellectual. He always used Catholic books of devotion—Horstius, the *Spiritual Exercises,* Avrillon, Surin and the like. He abolished the traditional Victorian family prayers in favour of Terce and Compline which were said in Englsh by the whole household at nine in the morning and ten at night.

It is strange that these sympathies never led him to become a Catholic, for he had little of the *via media* Anglicanism of the High Church party. But he had a kind of hereditary 'political' loyalty to the Church of England, and I remember he once said to me that no man has the right to leave the church to which his fathers belonged. In this he was more Roman than Catholic; nor was he consistent in

this social traditionalism, for in many ways he was a strong individualist—his return to Craven was in part a deliberate reaction against the Protestant tradition and an attempt to recover lost spiritual roots in a past which he felt to be Catholic.

It is true that there were few remaining traces of Catholic tradition in Victorian Craven. Of the two old Catholic families of the region one—the Inglebys—had conformed to the established Church early in the nineteenth century and there now remained only the Tempests of Broughton. Nor was there any strong Anglo-Catholic tradition, for as I have said the Anglican revival of the nineteenth century was slow to reach the dales. On the other hand with regard to literary culture Craven had never become so barbarous as many of the remoter districts of England. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Richard Heber of Marton was one of the greatest of English bibliophiles in the great age of English libraries, and in the next generations this tradition was carried on by Miss Frances Currer of Kildwick, who was almost the only woman book collector of early Victorian times. In my own time our local member of Parliament, Walter Morrison, who lived in the middle of the moors at Malham Tarn, was a man of very wide interests and a real patron of culture, who did his best to make the great Victorians visit and appreciate Craven, from John Stuart Mill and Darwin to Ruskin and Tom Hughes and Charles Kingsley.

Thus in spite of the absence of social life, and partly because of it, the life of Craven was not unfavourable to the things of the mind, and though it was above all to my parents that I owed my education, their teaching did not conflict with the spirit of the land, as it had done at Alvestoke, and as it was to do at my private school. I loved the freedom and the absence of social constraint which were due not only to the wild moorland country, but also to the scattered type of settlement which had come down from Scandinavian and Celtic times, and which made almost every farm and household a separate unit. Everything depended on the family, which was still a true economic society as it had been from the beginning of Britain and as it remained until the coming of motor transport. For the family was not simply a man and his wife and children, it included all the working members of the social unit, as the word itself denotes. In the seventeenth century a Craven farmer could still say that he 'had a very great family consisting of 15 or 16 persons for all or most of the year, and 50 or 60 persons at some seasons when his husbandry affairs required many hands'.[4]

In the past, the whole of England had been built of these societies from the noble household, like that of the Cliffords, which formed a little court, down to the peasant household of the yeoman farmer, who as a freeholder—*liber et legalis homo*—was the basic unit of the

[4] Brayshaw and Robinson. *History of the Ancient Parish of Giggleswick* (p. 117).

English commonwealth. This system had for centuries been falling to pieces under the pressure of social centralization and the influence of the capital on the upper classes and the industrial revolution and the new economic forces on the peasant farmers. But in outlying regions like Craven something of the old spirit still survived and though the yeoman economy had passed away about the middle of the nineteenth century, the farmers of the dales still preserved the old yeoman way of life and type of character.

Similarly the country house in the Victorian age still stood for the old tradition of the family society, so long as it was not important enough to be dominated by London society, and at Hartlington the remoteness of the situation and my father's conscious desire to build up a self-sufficient social unit strengthened this tradition. The family was a society that rested on the three essential institutions of the kitchen, the stables and the garden. The coachman, who had been a driver in the artillery and had been with my father long before his marriage, and the cook, who came from Herefordshire, were both important figures in the family society and hold a leading place in my childhood memories. Although the Victorian repression of children was a thing of the past, the modern emancipation of them was still a long way in the future, and the principle of authority played a large place in our lives. One felt that servants were important people, because they held social office and authority, whereas children were only, so to speak, candidates for office, and had no independent sphere of their own except the schoolroom. But the world of the schoolroom was pale and uninteresting in comparison with the warmth and variety of the kitchen over which the cook ruled like a figure in a fairy story, or compared with the saddle room where everything was in its right place and yet the sense of discipline and order was stimulating and not repressive.

Above all this there was my father's room which was at once a workshop, an office and a library, for when he was not reading he was always at work on some mathematical calculation or on the construction of some gadget. This was no great library after the Heber tradition, but it was a room of books that were continually being used and I realized that this was the true centre of the household and that it was for this that it all existed. I spent much of my time here, for my father enjoyed reading aloud and explaining things, and thus I gradually became initiated into almost all his books except the mathematical ones, though I find it difficult to say in which year I discovered which writer. These last years of the Victorian age were a good time for children intellectually, for the writers of the age—Kipling, Stevenson, Belloc, Wells and Andrew Lang—were all giving their best for children in those days, and there were others who did not write for children like William Morris and W. H. Hudson and W. P. Ker, whose work reached one indirectly at secondhand through my parents or others.

Thus books became a second world to me, not merely a dream

world of fantasy into which one could escape but an extension of the real world which enlarged and enriched it. Thanks to my parents I learnt the essential connection between *story* and *history,* so that I came to know the past not so much by the arid path of the *Child's History of England,* as through the enchanted world of myth and legend. In this way I discovered very early that history was not a flat expanse of time, measured off in dates, but a series of different worlds and that each of them had its own spirit and form and its own riches of poetic imagination. As Craven was different from Wales, so the world of the Sagas was different from the world of the Celtic tradition. And as myth passed into history, so history in its turn left its visible imprint on the world I knew. The scattered farms and hamlets of Craven often preserved the names that one found in the Sagas—Grims and Helgis and Thorlaks—and it was on Stainmoor on the northern frontier of Craven that one of the great figures of Viking saga and poetry met his end.[5]

No doubt this initiation into the past had its disadvantages from the practical utilatarian point of view, but it was education in the true sense of the word. Whatever form of education is inflicted on children, they will always find mythical or heroic figures to satisfy their imagination. If they do not have King Arthur and Peredur or Sigurd and Regin, they will content themselves with Donald Duck and Dick Barton. It may even be argued that the latter are healthier because they are more spontaneous and near to contemporary reality than Branwen the daughter of Llyr or Burnt Njal. But are they more real because they are more at home in our impoverished world? I believe the old myths are better not only intrinsically, but because they lead further and open a door into the mind as well as into the past. This was the old road which carries us back not merely for centuries but for thousands of years; the road by which every people has travelled and from which the beginnings of every literature have come. I mean the road of oral tradition. It may be that the changes of our generation, the increased speed of life and the mechanization of popular culture by the cinema and the radio have closed this road for ever. But if so, those of us who remember the world before the wars have witnessed a change in human consciousness far greater than we have realized, and what we are remembering is not the Victorian age but a whole series of ages—a river of immemorial time which has suddenly dried up and become lost in the seismic cleft that has opened between the present and the past.

[The first part of 'Tradition and Inheritance' appeared in the Spring, 1949 number of *The Wind and the Rain,* a few copies of which are still available.]

[5] Eric, the son of Harold Fairhair, whose death is commemorated in the *Eriksmal* and for whom Egil Skallagrimson composed his famous ode of ransom at York in 945.

FROM KIERKEGAARD'S *PREFACE* TO PREFACES

[All of Kierkegaard's works, at least all the productions which he regarded as a part of his 'literature', have in the course of the last thirteen years been translated into English (in twenty-eight volumes!)—except two little books which in a hundred years have become antiquated. One of them is called *The Crisis in the Life of an Actress;* the other, called *Preface,* consists in fact of eight prefaces, which in the title are described as 'Light reading for particular classes', namely, the leading literary people of the time, at whom the author is good-naturedly poking fun. But these classes are so 'particular' that today, even in Copenhagen, it would need a heavy commentary to make this light reading intelligible. However, Kierkegaard was humorous enough to introduce these prefaces by a preface; and because this preface needs not a single word of explanation, I translate it here, glad to salvage something from this little book, and to present an instance of Kierkegaard's humour in which there is not a trace of instruction nor edification. W. L.]

It is an experience often confirmed that an insignificant trait, a mere trifle, a heedless remark, an unguarded outburst, a casual expression of the face, an involuntary gesture, may afford one an opportunity to steal one's way into a man's interior and discover what would have evaded a more painstaking investigation. However, lest this insignificant remark might degenerate and become self-important, I refrain at this moment from following it up, and I hasten on to the subject I have in hand.

In comparison with a book, the preface is insignificant; and yet by a careful and comparative study of prefaces might not one buy at a cheap price a precious opportunity for investigation? So much has been done scientifically to divide literature into classes, to assign to the work of each author its place in his own age, and the place of each age in the whole history of the race; but nobody reflects what would be gained if one literatus or another were to be trained not only to read prefaces but to do it so thoroughly that he would begin with the earliest times and go on through all the centuries up to our own day. Prefaces bear the impress of the accidental, as do dialects, idioms, provincialisms. To a far greater extent than books they are subjected to the tyranny of fashion, which changes like fashions in dress, so that at one time prefaces are long, at another time short, now they are light, then heavy, then stiff, then careless; now they are troubled, almost anxious, then self-confident to the point of impudence; sometimes they are not without a perception of the weakness of the book, sometimes they are stricken with blindness, sometimes they recognize these faults better than does any one else; sometimes the preface has been an appetizer for the book, sometimes an after-smack. And all this is purely ceremonial. Even an author who in his book defies the age conforms to conventional usage in the least important part, the preface, and thereby lays himself open to

many comical collisions which are of great interest to the invesigator who asks whether and why. The more I think about it, the richer appears to me the profit such a study promises to yield. Only think of the contrast between the preface and the book, an example of Greek naïveté which would constitute an excellent background for the presentation of one's results. But here I check this flight of fancy, which would be likely to lead me on false scent since I lack the appropriate apparatus.

In modern learned literature the preface has received its *coup de grace*. Viewed from this standpoint, the author of yesterday is likely to cut a sorrowful figure, at which one hardly knows whether to laugh or cry, because his clumsy hesitation in getting at the subject makes him comic, and his naïve notion that everybody cares about him makes him pathetic. Nowadays such a situation cannot occur; for when one begins a book with its subject, and begins the System [*i.e.*, the Hegelian System] with Nothing, there would seem to be nothing left to say in a preface. This situation has drawn my attention to the fact that the preface represents a very special sort of literary production, and since it is now thrust to one side it seems high time for the preface to emancipate itself, as everybody else is doing. In this way it might still amount to something. The incommensurable, which in an earlier day an author posited in the preface to his book, can now find a place in a preface which is not the preface to any book. Thus I think the conflict may be composed to the mutual pleasure and contentment of all parties. If the preface and the book cannot be harnessed together, let the one give a writ of divorcement to the other.

The modern scientific method has made one aware that a rupture must come about. It is my merit that I take this thought seriously. I merely mention here a phenomenon which indicates the deeper reason for this. Every æsthetically cultivated author has certainly known a moment when he had no desire to write a book but would be glad to write a preface, whether for a book of his own or for that of another. This indicates that the preface is essentially different from the book; for, if such were not the case, the impulse to write a preface would be felt only when one had written a book, or when one thought of wanting to write a book, and, thinking about this generally, raises the question whether the preface ought to be written first or last. However, when a man is in one of these two situations he either must have a subject or think that he has it. But now when even without this one may feel inclined to write a preface, it can easily be seen that it must not deal with a definite subject; for, if it did, the preface itself would become a book, and this question about the difference between preface and book would be ignored. The preface as such, the emancipated preface, must therefore have no subject to deal with but must deal with nothing; and in so far as it seems to treat of something and deal with something, this must be only an apparent or simulated movement.

Herewith the preface is defined as lyric pure and simple and thus is put in its proper category, whereas the vulgar and traditional preface is a ceremony which conforms to time and custom. A preface is a mood. To write a preface is like smothering a laugh, like strumming a guitar, like chatting with a child, like spitting out of the window. One knows not how it comes about—one is overpowered by a desire, the desire to shudder romantically in the mood of literary production, the desire to write a preface, the desire for this *leves sub noctem sussuri*. To write a preface is like ringing a man's door bell just to fool him, it is like walking past a young girl's window and keeping one's eyes fixed on the pavement, it is like swinging one's cane in the air in defiance of the wind, it is like taking off one's hat with a flourish though there is no one to salute. To write a preface is like having done something for which one is justified in expecting a certain measure of attention, it is like having something on one's conscience which tempts one to make a confidential confession, it is like bowing in the dance in spite of the fact that one does not budge from the spot, it is like throwing the left thigh over the saddle, pulling the bridle to the right, hearing the steed snort, and saying, 'A fig for the whole world!' It is like being in company without feeling irked by company, it is like standing on Valdby Hill looking for wild geese. To write a preface is like arriving with the diligence at the first station, coming to a stop in the dark shed, anticipating what will be seen, beholding the door open, and with that the heavens disclosed, seeing for oneself the road which stretches endlessly ahead, descrying the expected mystery of the forest, the alluring disappearance of the foot-path, hearing the loud crack of the coachman's whip and the confused resonance, listening to the sound of the posthorn and the seductive invitation of its echo and the cheerful conversation of the passengers. To write a preface is like arriving at one's destination, entering the cosy parlour, greeting the figures one has with so much longing desired to see, taking a seat in the armchair, filling one's pipe, lighting it—and having so endlessly much to talk about with one another. To write a preface is like becoming aware that one is about to fall in love, the soul sweetly uneasy, the riddle proposed, every happening a hint of its solution. To write a preface is like pushing aside the branches of the jasmine arbor and seeing *her* who sits there clandestinely—my beloved! Such, ah, such as this it is to write a preface! And what manner of man is he who writes it? He goes in and out among men like a fool in winter and like a simpleton in summer, he is hail and farewell in one person, always joyous and carefree, well pleased with himself, a light-minded ne'er-do-well, indeed an immoral person, for he does not go to the stock exchange in order to scrape some money together, but just to walk through it. He does not speak in general conventions because the air is too close; he does not propose a toast in the club because one has to give notice of it several days in advance; he does not run errands for the System; he pays no taxes, indeed he does not take

this matter seriously; he goes through life as a shoemaker's apprentice goes whistling along the street, though the man who has to wear the shoes must sit and wait—let him wait then so long as there is a single slide left for him to coast on, or the most insignificant sight demanding his attention. Such, ah, such as this is the man who writes a preface!

Well, about this every man is at liberty to think as he pleases, if it occurs to him to do so. With me it is a very different matter, for I am bound by an oath and by a solemn obligation to concern myself solely with this branch of literary art. How this came about I shall tell the reader at once. Here is just the place for it, like gossip in the *Kafeeklatch.*

I may say that though few are so happily married, and fewer perhaps are so grateful for this happiness, yet in my married life I have stumbled upon difficulties the discovery of which was due to my wife, for I had no suspicion of them. Several months had gone by since the wedding, and gradually I had acquired some practice in the method of living together conjugally, when there awakened in me little by little a desire I had always cherished and which I thought in perfect simplicity I might venture to indulge, the pursuit, that is to say, of some sort of literary labour. The subject was chosen, what books on this theme I myself possessed were laid out on the table, some others were borrowed from the Royal Library, my notes were put in order for ready reference, my pen so to say was dipped. Meanwhile, hardly had my wife conceived a suspicion that something was brewing than she began to watch my movements carefully. Occasionally she let fall an ambiguous word, an obscure hint, to the effect that the press of business which kept me in my study for long periods, my literary headaches, were not to her liking. To this I stopped my ears, pretending not to understand her, as indeed I did not at the beginning, till finally she took me by surprise and compelled me to make the official confession that I was in the way of wishing to become an author. If up to this point her proceedings had been rather in the nature of a reconnaissance, she now concentrated her forces more and more definitely until at last she made an open declaration of war—so open indeed that she determined to confiscate everything I wrote in order to put it to a better use, as a substratum for her embroideries, for curl-papers, etcetera. Hardly can an author's situation be more desperate than mine; for even the man who is subjected to special censorship can still hope to make his work so innocuous that it may obtain an *imprimatur;* but my productions are constantly smothered at birth. In another way too it became clearer and clearer to me how desperate my position was; for as soon as I discovered I was a victim of the suppression of the press, it naturally became clear to me (though I had not thought of such a thing before) that it would be a mortal disaster to the human race if my writings never saw the light of day. What then am I to do? I have not, as a censured author has, the right of making an appeal to the Chan-

cellory or to Parliament, to public opinion or to the memory of future generations: I live or die, stand or fall, with my wife. It is true that by my contemporaries I am regarded as a good and skilful disputant, well able to plead my own cause; but in my present situation such proficiency is of little avail; for, though I could argue with the devil himself, I cannot argue with my wife. She, in fact, has only one syllogism, or not so much as one, I should say. What learned people call sophistry, she, who has no concern for learning, calls 'teasing'. So the procedure is very simple . . . for one who knows how to proceed. Whenever I say anything which does not meet with her approval, whether it is expressed in syllogistic form or not, whether it is a long discourse or a brief observation, the form is indifferent, but when what I have said does not meet with her approbation, she looks at me with an expression which is at once lovable, captivating, good-natured and enchanting, but also triumphant and annihilating, and she says, 'That is only teasing'. The consequence is that all my dexterity as a disputant is an article of luxury for which there is no use in my household economy. If I, the practised dialectician, represent the course of the law, which as the poet says is 'very long', my wife, like the Royal Danish Chancellory, is *kurtz und bundig*—although from that high tribunal she differs in being very lovable; for it is precisely her lovableness which entitles her to an authority which she knows how to assert every instant in the most enchanting way.

Thus the matter stands. I have never got further than the introductory paragraph. Since that was of a general nature, and to my thinking so happily phrased that it would entertain her, if I were not the author, it occurred to me that I might win her over to my cause by reading it to her aloud. I was prepared to hear her reject my proposal and take advantage of it to say, 'That finally it should come to this! That you not only would meddle with writing but even oblige me to listen to your lectures!' Not this at all. She accepted my proposal in as friendly a spirit as possible, she listened, she laughed, she admired. I thought the victory won. She stepped up to the table where I was sitting, laid an arm confidingly about my neck and begged me to read a passage over again. I begin to read, holding the manuscript so high that she could follow my reading with her eye. Splendid! I am beside myself with joy—but I am not quite through reading that passage when suddenly the manuscript bursts into flame. Without my noticing it she had pushed the one candle under the manuscript. The fire had the upper hand, nothing could be saved, my introductory paragraph went up in a blaze—accompanied by general applause, for my wife applauded for both of us. She clapped her hands like a merry child, and then threw her arms about my neck as passionately as though I had long been separated from her, indeed had been lost to her. I was unable to interject a word. She begged me to forgive her for fighting as she had for the sake of our love, she besought me with an ardour which almost made

me believe that I had actually been on the point of becoming a lost husband. She declared that she could not bear to see me so much changed. 'Your thought', said she, 'belongs to me, it must be mine. Your attentions to me are my daily bread; your applause, your smile, your witticisms are my very life, my inspiration. O concede to me, do not deny me, what by right belongs to me. Do this for my sake, for the sake of my joy, that joyfully I may be able to do what is my only joy, to think of you, to find my whole contentment in wooing you day by day continually as once you wooed me.'

What can justify a woman in such behaviour?—a woman who not only is lovable in the eyes of all who know her but is lovely in my eyes, delicious all the day long. Substantially, her point of view is this: a husband who is an author is not much better than a husband who spends his nights at the club, indeed he is worse; for the man who goes to the club must himself admit that there is a breach, but being an author is a self-superior sort of infidelity which cannot awaken repentance although the consequences are worse. After all, the man who goes to the club is absent only so long as he is absent; but the author . . . 'Yes, you probably know it yourself; but there has been a complete change in you. You spin yourself into pensiveness from morning till night. One notices it especially at the mid-day meal. There you sit gazing straight in front of you, like a ghost, or like King Nebuchadnezzar reading the invisible writing on the wall. Then when I with my own hands have prepared the coffee for you, have put it on the tray, approach you cheerfully, stand before you, make a curtsey to you—at that point, for sheer terror, I come near dropping the tray, and the worst of it is that I have then lost all my joy and cheer and can no longer curtsey to you.'

Moreover, just as my wife knows how to introduce her Catonic *praeterea censeo* whenever she has a chance—though not so wearisomely as Cato—so too everything must serve her as an argument. Her reasoning is like a magic incantation. In the course of a debate if it should happen to me that the adversary advanced such arguments as hers, probably I would turn my back upon him and say of him as says the Master of Arts in Holberg's play, 'An ignorant fellow who knows not how to distinguish between *ubi praedicamentale* and *ubi transcendentale*'. But with my wife it is a very different matter: her reasoning proceeds straight from the heart—and to the heart. In that respect she has taught me to understand how a Catholic can be edified by prayers in Latin; for her reasoning, regarded as such, is like Latin to one who understands no Latin—and yet she always edifies, touches and moves me.

'To be an author when one is a married man', says she, 'is plain infidelity', exactly the opposite to what the parson said; for he said that the validity of marriage depends on the husband's vow, 'Keep ye only unto her', and that's all there is to it. If I reply that she had not listened attentively to what the parson said (that one might almost think she had better go back to hear the parson again), if I declare

that marriage is a special duty, indeed a 'peculiar' duty, and explain that all duties may be classified as general or peculiar, and that all duties are duties towards God, oneself and one's neighbour, by this she is not in the least embarrassed. All this is declared to be 'teasing'. Moreover, she says she has not forgotten what is written in the Instructions about Matrimony, that 'it is man's peculiar duty'. In vain I try to point out that she has fallen into a linguistic error, that she construes the word illogically, ungrammatically and in defiance of hermeneutic principles, since that sentence deals only with the husband's duty, but the next speaks of the wife's 'peculiar' duty with reference to matrimony. In vain. She holds tenaciously to her initial position, and affirms that to be an author when one is a married man is the worst infidelity. So it has even become the 'worst' infidelity. If then I would remind her that according to divine and human law the husband is 'the head', that, if this were not so, my rank in life is a very lowly one since I am only an enclitic to her (which after all is to demand too much) she then reproaches me with my unreasonable-for you know very well', says she, 'that I make no demand, that my only wish is to be nothing in comparison with you.' If against this I protest that, being only an enclitic, it is important to me that she should make the most of herself, so that I shall not become still less by being an enclitic to nothing, then she looks at me and says, 'Mere teasing'.

My wife is consistent in her fixed idea. I have tried to flatter her, saying that after all it would be a gratification to see my, *our* name become famous, and that she is the muse who inspires me. She will not listen to this. She regards the first suggestion as the greatest misfortune, involving my complete perdition, and she could wish with all her heart that an emphatical critic would send me home with my tail between my legs. As for the second suggestion, she does not believe it, still less would she wish it to be true, and with all her soul she prays God to forbid that she should be guilty of the loss of our conjugal happiness. She is inaccessible, and *summa summarum,* when all is said and done, there remains this: 'Either a proper husband—or else . . . well, to me the rest is perfectly indifferent'.

Although the reader will surely find, as I do, that her reasoning is rather weak and that she overlooks all the problems properly involved in this question, especially the border conflicts between the conjugal and the individual, which might furnish enough occupation for a profound as well as a keen intelligence, yet she has still an argument up her sleeve, *in subsidio,* to which the reader perhaps will attach more importance. One day after we had wrangled over our differences and the conflict as usual had been transfigured into a *reintegratio amoris,* she took my arm confidingly, looked at me ingratiatingly, and said, 'My dear, I didn't wish to say it to you bluntly, because I hoped in another way to get you to desist from your purpose, and hoped to spare you a mortification; but as this has no chance of success I must tell you, with all the candour you have a right to

expect from your wife, that I do not believe you are capable of becoming an author—but, on the other hand, you have genius and talent and extraordinary gifts for being my husband, to such a degree that I should constantly admire you, whereas for my part I would gladly feel my own insignificance and express my love for you only in thanksgiving.' Into this argument, however, she did not enter with any more detail. When I wanted to enter into the whether, the how and the why, she had already another declaration, saying that some day I would regret having been unfaithful to her by becoming an author, and then I would not be able to cast aside this regret but must taste its bitterness.

What was the end of this conflict? Who won, my *hostis domesticus* (household enemy), or the author? It surely will not be difficult to guess, though for a moment it may be difficult for the reader, since he reads the foregoing and sees at the same time that I actually became an author. The end of it was that I promised not to want to be an author. But as one sees in learned disputations when the opponent has disarmed a man of all his objections and the poor fellow adduces some linguistic point of no importance, and the triumphant opponent courteously admits the claim in order to save the man's feelings, so it was that at the last I obtained permission to write a 'preface'. In this instance I appealed to analogies, asserting that men had promised their wives never more to take snuff and received by way of compensation permission to have as many snuff boxes as they would. She accepted my proposal, perhaps with the notion that one could not write a preface without writing a book (a thing I did not dare to do), unless one were a famous author who might write a preface at the request of another author—and that could never be the case with me.

So much concerning my oath and my obligation. This little thing here, a mere trifle, I could write *salva conscientia* (with a good conscience). Nevertheless I did it without my wife's knowledge, taking advantage of a sojourn in the country. My prayer to the critic is that he will deal gently with me. For suppose he should find it to be true, as my wife said, that I am not fit to be an author; suppose the merciless man were to give me a thrashing; suppose my wife were to see it—then in vain would I seek cheer and comfort from my cherished companion. Presumably she would exult with joy at carrying her point and at seeing me thus taken to task; she would find her faith in a righteous providence strengthened and her idea confirmed that to be an author when one is a married man is the worst infidelity.

Translated by WALTER LOWRIE

BLAKE AND THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

MARGARET BOTTRALL

TO the end of his life Blake believed passionately in the possibility of a redeemed society, though he gave up his belief in the efficacy of political revolutions to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. No man of vision and spirit, growing up as he did during the American War of Independence and confronted in young manhood with the French Revolution, could have resisted the dream of a new era of liberty succeeding the overthrow of tyrannical forms of government. The turn of events forced Blake to abandon that romantic delusion, and to revise his conception of evil. The pressure of personal experience, even more than that of political events, drove him to the less optimistic but essentially religious belief that a man's self is his own worst enemy. The extirpation of tyrants is not a final but a recurrent phenomenon in social history, and though Blake never gave up his fight against tyrannies of every kind, his later writings take full account of man's natural propensity to spoil all his own best enterprises by sinning against the light.

Forgiveness is not a quality which appeals to rebels. The last thing a rebel wants to do is to forgive those who sin against him or against society; nor is he conscious of any need to be forgiven. But Blake reached a point where he wrote:

> The Spirit of Jesus is continual forgiveness of Sin: he who waits to be righteous before he enters into the Saviour's kingdom, the Divine Body, will never enter there. I am perhaps the most sinful of men. I pretend not to holiness: yet I pretend to love, to see, to converse with daily as man with man, & the more to have an interest in the Friend of Sinners.

There are obvious links between Blake's preoccupation with forgiveness and the revivalist movements of his day. It was by presenting Jesus as the Friend of Sinners that Wesley touched the hearts of multitudes, and Blake would certainly have approved of that verse from the Wesleys' Conversion hymn which runs:

> Outcasts of Men, to you I call,
> Harlots and publicans and thieves!
> He spread his arms to embrace you all;
> Sinners alone his grace receives.
> No need of him the righteous have;
> He came the lost to seek and save.

On the other hand, it was quite alien to him to consider the whole

creation as labouring under the burden of sin and the threat of damnation, as the Methodists conceived it:

> Grov'ling on earth we still must lie
> Till Christ the curse repeal;
> Till Christ, descending from on high,
> Infected nature heal.

Nor was he obsessed by that need for the personal assurance of divine pardon which characterized the Methodists. John Wesley, describing his own conversion, says:

> An assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine,* and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

Blake's concern was far more with the practice of forgiveness between man and man than with any assurance of personal salvation. More than most poets he treasured the idea of fellowship. God's Kingdom will come, Jerusalem be restored to Albion, only when men learn to live together in brotherhood. This they cannot do by the practice of philanthropy or by a romantic belief in human perfectibility, but only by the day-to-day exercise of patience and generosity towards human imperfection. Romantic love has the power of changing all the colours and values of life, so that the beloved is seen transformed. A special power is given to lovers' eyes to discern the divine image in one another; but no one can stay long on the mount of transfiguration. Disillusion follows exaltation unless there is the willingness to forgive and be forgiven. Compassion and patience and generosity are qualities comprised in Blake's conception of forgiveness; and he did not think of them as private virtues, to be practised only between persons bound together by emotional ties. He knew that there can be no salvation of society unless the same standards of behaviour prevail between one group and another as prevail between one friend and another. 'Friendship cannot exist without Forgiveness of Sins continually'; a sane society can be organized on no other basis.

Bishop Gore remarks in *The Holy Spirit and the Church*:

> There is nothing, I think, more central to the mind of Christ than the principle that you can only love God in fellowship—that you can only love God by and in loving your neighbour. And then, when you ask, 'Who is my neighbour?' it appears that your neighbour is every man; and that the function of the Church is to give a home to all men indiscriminately, if only they want to lead the good life; and to let men see in the Church what brotherhood means, there where the motives of men are sufficiently purged to make real brotherhood possible.

If the visible, practising Church had actually made this possibility evident, Blake would have been its champion and not its opponent. Gore has in mind that true, but as yet unrealized, community of the sons of God which Blake called Jerusalem. And Blake, in exhorting his fellow-Christians to build up Jerusalem, was defending the true Church.

He wrote to Thomas Butts, during his stay at Felpham:

> The Thing I have most at Heart—more than life, or all that seems to make life comfortable without—is the Interest of True Religion & Science, & whenever anything appears to affect that Interest (Especially if I myself omit any duty to my Station as a Soldier of Christ) It gives me the greatest of torments.

If ever a man laboured in knowledge to build up Jerusalem it was Blake, poet, prophet, painter, engraver, printer. He was aware that the England in which he lived was fundamentally irreligious and un-Christian. Like all prophets, he was without honour in his own country, and the disappointment which he suffered at the failure of his one public exhibition of pictures may account to some extent for the emphasis on the importance of Art in his later writings. Consciousness of his neglected greatness did not, however, seduce him into self-pity but gave a sharp edge of indignation to his criticisms of the state of society in which he was compelled to earn his living.

> 'Art Degraded, Imagination Denied, War Governed the Nations.'

> 'A Warlike State can never produce Art.'

> 'Let it no more be said that Empires Encourage Arts, for it is Arts that Encourage Empires. Arts & Artists are Spiritual & laugh at Mortal Contingencies.'

When Blake observes that art cannot flourish in a warlike state, he is not merely making a professional complaint. He is tacitly equating art with the life of the spirit, as he so often did in his latter years. Peace is a pre-condition of the good life; there can be no peace until men are willing to forgive one another; consequently forgiveness is linked with creativeness; they are complementary conditions.

War has no place in a society that is inspired by the religion of Jesus. One of Blake's strongest reasons for condemning historic Christendom was its encouragement of wars. For almost two thousand years Christians have been exhorted to love their enemies. Some few saints, known and unknown, have indeed learned to do so. To the majority of those who profess and call themselves Christians, however, the command seems too paradoxical to be taken seriously; they dismiss it as a counsel of perfection, which indeed it is. But Blake felt the force of the connection between the words of Jesus, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Heavenly Father is perfect' and the words which precede them in St. Matthew's gospel:

> Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

To feel an affection for your enemy is impossible; to forgive him is possible. By isolating this aspect of love, Blake gives a new impetus to the command of Christ; freeing it from the false associations which

always tend to accumulate round the most ambiguous word in the English language.

Of that ambiguity Blake himself was unusually conscious. No poet has expressed it more clearly than he did in *Songs of Experience*, where the Clod and the Pebble, advancing contrary views about the nature of love, do not contradict but complement one another.

> 'Love seeketh not Itself to please
> 'Nor for itself hath any care,
> 'But for another gives its ease,
> 'And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair.'
>
> So sung a little Clod of Clay
> Trodden with the cattle's feet,
> But a Pebble of the brook
> Warbled out these metres meet:
>
> 'Love seeketh only Self to please,
> 'To bind another to its delight,
> 'Joys in another's loss of ease,
> 'And builds in a Hell in Heaven's despite.'[1]

Either view is incomplete without the other; together they epitomize the paradoxical nature of love, that is compounded of selfless and self-regarding elements. Blake's dialectical habit of thought enabled him to grasp and express the complexity of impulses which motivate human behaviour.

> Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.

His own experience, however, caused him to ally himself more and more with the Clod of Clay. 'Love and Pity are the same', he says in *Jerusalem*; and in a lyric written in his notebook at about the same period:

> I thought Love liv'd in the hot sun shine
> But O, he lives in the Moony light!
> I thought to find Love in the heat of day,
> But sweet Love is the Comforter of Night.
>
> Seek Love in the Pity of others' woe,
> In the gentle relief of another's care,
> In the darkness of night & the winter's snow,
> In the naked & outcast, Seek Love there!

Too much has been written, on too little evidence, about Blake's relationship with his wife to justify another hypothetical reconstruction of his sexual and emotional life; but the poem from which these two stanzas are taken, *William Bond*, has an autobiographical ring, and they may be taken as summing up a real development in his understanding of the nature of love.

[1]Father Martin D'Arcy, quoting these lines from memory in *The Mind and Heart of Love* (1945), substitutes 'Lust' for 'Love' in the third stanza; thereby blunting the point of the poem and depriving himself of a wonderfully apt quotation in support of his Agape plus Eros theory.

At the time when he was drafting *Songs of Experience* Blake wrote:

Love to faults is always blind
Always is to joy inclin'd,
Lawless, wing'd, & unconfin'd,
And breaks all chains from every mind.

Deceit to secresy confin'd,
Lawful, cautious, & refin'd;
To every thing but interest blind,
And forges fetters for the mind.

Whether he was contrasting his own temperament with his wife's, or the artist's with the prudent citizen's, is immaterial; undoubtedly it is of himself that he is speaking in the first stanza, and the love he glorifies is that same ardent emotion which Oothon sings of in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*:

'Love, Love, Love, happy happy Love! free as the mountain wind!'

But a few years later he was writing:

Let us agree to give up Love
And root up the infernal grove;
Then shall we return & see
The worlds of happy Eternity.

& throughout all Eternity
I forgive you, you forgive me.
As our dear Redeemer said,
'This the Wine & this the Bread.'

Speaking here of the intimate love of person for person, Blake contrasts passion and compassion. More remarkably, he reads the message of forgiveness into the words with which Christ instituted the sacrament of His body and blood. His extraordinary power of poetic penetration into the mysteries of the Christian Faith is revealed in these few lines. Because forgiveness involves self-sacrifice, we, by extending forgiveness one to another, perpetuate the self-offering of Christ; sustaining each other, too, with the daily bread and heartening wine of ever-renewed sympathy.

Blake was as much obsessed as D. H. Lawrence by the antagonism between man and woman. More than once he exclaims

What may Man be? who can tell! But what may Woman be
To have power over Man from Cradle to corruptible Grave?

The prophetic books and his notebooks too reflect his almost agonised preoccupation with the problems of sexual love. They are thrashed out again and again in the struggles of the Zoas to be united with their Emanations and in the dilemmas of Albion confronted with Vala and Jerusalem. There is therefore nothing facile about his conclusion

Without Forgiveness of Sin, Love is Itself Eternal Death.

Not until Los has assimilated the bitter experience of sexual strife is he able to cry:

'O Holy Generation, Image of Regeneration!
'O point of mutual forgiveness between enemies!
'Birthplace of the Lamb of God incomprehensible!

As long as sexual intercourse is associated with the ideas of conquest and possession, it is a warfare destructive to both combatants; when it is the expression of a desire for the full reconciliation of differing identities with one another, then only it becomes redeemed and holy.

Because forgiveness was, for Blake, the loveliest aspect of love, he imagined that the birth of 'the Lamb of God incomprehensible' had been preceded by an act of forgiveness. Because human tenderness meant so much to him, he re-wrote the story of the nativity of Jesus, working on a hint in the gospel of St. Matthew. Jerusalem in a vision saw

Joseph the Carpenter in Nazareth & Mary
His espoused Wife. And Mary said, 'If thou put me away from thee
Dost thou not murder me?' Joseph spoke in anger & fury, 'Should I
Marry a Harlot & an Adulteress?' Mary answer'd, 'Art thou more pure
Than thy Maker who forgiveth Sins & calls again Her that is Lost?
Tho' She hates, he calls her again in love. I love my dear Joseph,
But he driveth me away from his presence; yet I hear the voice of God
In the voice of my Husband: tho' he is angry for a moment, he will not
Utterly cast me away; if I were pure, never could I taste the sweets
Of the Forgiveness of Sins; if I were holy, I could never behold the tears
Of love of him who loves me in the midst of his anger in furnace of fire.
'Ah, my Mary!' said Joseph, weeping over & embracing her closely in
His arms, 'Doth he forgive Jerusalem, & not exact Purity from her who is
Polluted? I heard his voice in my sleep and his Angel in my dream,
Saying, "Doth Jehovah Forgive a Debt only on condition that it shall
Be Payed? Doth he Forgive Pollution only on condition of Purity?
That Debt is not Forgiven! That Pollution is not Forgiven!
Such is the Forgiveness of the Gods, the Moral Virtues of the
Heathen whose tender Mercies are Cruelty. But Jehovah's Salvation
Is without Money & without Price, in the Continual Forgiveness of Sins,
In the Perpetual Mutual Sacrifice in Great Eternity; for behold,
There is none that liveth & Sinneth not! And this is the Covenant
Of Jehovah: If you Forgive one-another, so shall Jehovah Forgive You,
That He himself may Dwell among You. Fear not then to take
To thee Mary thy Wife, for she is with Child by the Holy Ghost."'.

This is Blake's most daring illustration of the message of forgiveness, unconditional and perpetual. Whereas the Church of Rome, in its veneration for virginity (besides, naturally, teaching the dogma of the Virgin birth of Christ) has evolved the dogma of the immaculate conception, Blake here evolved his own myth to express the extreme worth of compassionate love between man and woman. And in order that the world of generation should be redeemed, it seemed to him poetic logic that the redeemer should himself have been born like all the sons of men.

Or what was it that he took on
That he might bring Salvation?
A Body subject to be Tempted
From neither pain nor grief Exempted?
Or such a body as might not feel
The passions that with Sinners deal?

The freedom with which Blake manipulates the gospel stories is bound to shock the devout, yet his intention is pure; it is to underline

the divine humanity of Jesus so that we may feel our own human nature no obstacle to unity with God. If evidence is needed that Blake revered the Holy Family, we have the water-colours which he executed for Thomas Butts, picturing Our Lady with the Infant Jesus on a lamb and St. John, the death of Our Lady, the death of St. Joseph and the Assumption of Our Lady.[2]

The words of the Angel to Joseph are echoed in the preface to *The Everlasting Gospel*:

> This alone is the Gospel & this is the Life & Immortality brought to light by Jesus. Even the Covenant of Jehovah, which is This; If you forgive one another your Trespasses, so shall Jehovah forgive you, That he himself may dwell among you; but if you Avenge, you Murder the Divine Image, & he cannot dwell among you . . .

Man cannot be at peace with God unless he is at peace with his fellow man. Blake never wearies of reiterating this aspect of the gospel of Jesus; and another truth which he hammers home in *Jerusalem* is that a man who cherishes revengeful thoughts destroys his own true humanity, that indwelling Holy-one which is his immortal soul.

> Vengeance is the Destroyer of Grace & Repentance in the bosom
> Of the Injurer, in which the Divine Lamb is cruelly slain.
>
> He who envies or caluminates, which is murder & cruelty,
> Murders the Holy-one.

Christ is crucified perpetually by the hard-heartedness of the self-righteous. Every injury to the spirit is an injury to the Holy Spirit.

In feeling and in phraseology Blake is close here to William Law, who writes:

> Every Temper and Passion that is contrary to the new Birth of Christ and keeps the holy Immanuel from coming to Life in the Soul is in the strictest Truth of the Words a Murderer and Killer of the Lord of Life. . . The Christ of God was not then first crucified when the Jews brought him to the Cross; but Adam and Eve were his first real Murderers; for the Death which happened to them, in the Day they did eat of the earthly Tree, was the Death of the Christ of God, or the Divine Life in their Souls.[3]

In *The Spirit of Love* Law also develops the argument, which Blake later expounded, that Vengeance is not permissible to man

> because Vengeance can only work in the evil or disordered properties of fallen Nature; But Man being himself a Part of fallen Nature, and subject to its disordered Properties, is not allowed to work with them because it would be a stirring up of Evil in himself, and that is his Sin of Wrath or Revenge.
>
> God therefore reserves all Vengeance to himself, not because wrathful Revenge is a Temper or Quality that can have any Place in the holy Deity, but because the holy supernatural Deity, being free from

[2] I give the titles as they appear in the Catalogue of the Tate Gallery Exhibition of Blake's Works (1947).

[3] *The Spirit of Love*: Collected Works. Volume 8 (p. 6).

all the Properties of Nature, whence partial Love and Hatred spring, and being himself nothing but an Infinity of Love, Wisdom and Goodness, he Alone knoweth how to overrule the Disorders of Nature, and so to repay Evil with Evil that the Highest Good may be promoted by it.

To say therefore that Vengeance is to be reserved to God is only saying, in other words, that all the Evils in Nature are to be reserved and turned over to the Love of God to be healed by his Goodness.[4]

This teaching of Law's about the justice of God gave the gravest offence to Wesley. In the famous Open Letter of 1756, he set an array of biblical texts in opposition to Law's arguments, which he summarised under three heads.

There is no vindictive, avenging or punitive justice in God.
There is no wrath or anger in God.
God inflicts no punishment on any creature, neither in this world nor that to come.

This summary does not represent Law's position quite fairly, but it is a wonderfully accurate account of Blake's theories on the subject. While he sincerely admired the missionary efforts of Wesley and Whitefield, he repudiated completely their teaching that sin is a violation of the laws of God the supreme King and Judge, and that sinners are therefore justly liable to punishment, the Atonement of Christ being a means of exempting them from the penalty that is their due through the substitution of a Victim who suffered it in their stead.

By the time that Blake was writing *Jerusalem* he had come to believe that an eternal Mercy sustains the universe, and he could therefore write:

All things are so constructed
And builded by the Divine hand that the sinner shall always escape,
And he who takes vengeance alone is the criminal of Providence.

Even in his *Milton* period, he used the story of Satan to illustrate the theory that 'the sinner shall always escape'. The Eternals do not condemn him, but refer to him as 'the Sick One', 'the poor afflicted'.

Blake interpreted the story of Cain and Abel in the same way, and indeed, the account in the fourth chapter of Genesis is unequivocal. Far from branding Cain as a murderer,

The Lord said unto him, 'Whosoever slayeth Cain, Vengeance shall be taken upon him sevenfold'. And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain lest anyone finding him should smite him.

Working on his illuminated transcript of the Book of Genesis, Blake heads this chapter:

How Generation & Death took Possession of the Natural Man & of the Forgiveness of Sins written on the Murderer's Forehead.

Cain indeed labours under the curse of God because of his violent

[4] ibid: (p. 66).

sin against brotherhood; but his life is not forfeit. To Blake, Abel is the more Satanic figure since, in the words of the hymn

> Abel's blood for Vengeance
> Pleaded to the skies.

In his brief dramatic poem, *The Ghost of Abel* (designed as a corrective to Byron's *Cain* and dedicated To Lord Byron in the Wilderness), Blake presents Abel as 'the Accuser and Avenger of Blood'. When his ghost sinks down into the grave, Satan arises, 'Armed in glittering Scales with a crown and spear', crying out for human blood and threatening Jehovah, 'Thou shalt Thyself be Sacrificed to me Thy God on Calvary'. But Jehovah permits only self-sacrifice, not the sacrifice of retribution. The Lamb of God is given

> for an Atonement instead
> Of the Transgressor, or no Flesh or Spirit could ever live.

Moreover, Satan himself must

> go to Eternal Death
> In Self Annihilation, even till Satan, Self-subdu'd, Put off Satan
> Into the Bottomless Abyss, whose torment arises for ever & ever.

Blake was convinced that those who demand or exercise what they are pleased to call retributive justice bring themselves under judgement. In their self-righteous blindness, oblivious of their own need for divine and human charity, they inflict suffering upon the universal brotherhood:

> Injury the Lord heals, but Vengeance cannot be healed.
> As the Sons of Albion have done to Luvah, so they have in him
> Done to the Divine Lord & Saviour, who suffers with those that suffer;
> For not one sparrow can suffer & the whole universe not suffer also
> In all its regions, & its Father & Saviour not pity & weep.

Because of their imperfect understanding of the workings of divine love, which to human eyes so often seems unjust, the 'accusers' arrogate to themselves the task of punishing sinners, whereas their only duty is to pity and forgive, since 'there is none that liveth and sinneth not'.

> 'If I should dare to lay my finger on a grain of sand
> 'In way of vengeance, I punish the already punish'd. O whom
> 'Should I pity if I pity not the sinner who is gone astray?'

Sometimes Blake writes as though sin were merely an ailment or aberration: 'What is Sin but a little Error & Fault that is soon forgiven?' Yet this view of sin minimises the heroic worth of forgiveness, which he was so concerned to establish. He sought for a means of excusing the sinner without condoning the sin, and to meet this need worked out his theory of States.

The idea is adumbrated in *Milton* and explained more fully in

Jerusalem. A key passage is Erin's lament over 'the cruel holiness' of the sons of Albion, which ends with the reflection:

> 'Yet they are blameless, & Iniquity must be imputed only
> 'To the State they are enter'd into, that they may be deliver'd.
> 'Satan is the State of Death & not a Human existence . . .
> 'A World where Man is by Nature the enemy of Man,
> 'Because the Evil is Created into a State, that Men
> 'May be deliver'd time after time, evermore, Amen.
> 'Learn therefore, O Sisters, to distinguish the Eternal Human
> 'That walks about among the stones of fire in bliss & woe
> 'Alternate, from those States or Worlds in which the Spirit travels.
> 'This is the only means to Forgiveness of Enemies.'

There is another exposition of the theory that Mundane Life is a series of States through which the immortal soul must travel in the notes which Blake wrote to explain his vast composition, *A Vision of the Last Judgment*:

> Man Passes on, but States remain for Ever; he passes thro' them like a traveller who may as well suppose that the places he has pass'd thro' exist no more, as a Man may suppose that the States he has pass'd thro' Exist no more. Every thing is Eternal.

To these States Blake gave various names; Caiaphas and Pilate, for instance, represent 'Two States, where all those reside who Calumniate & Murder under Pretence of Holiness & Justice'.

Like many of the ideas thrown out by Blake, this is suggestive and stimulating rather than rationally sound. By denying individual responsibility, this theory of states cuts at the root of all morality. Yet the state of sinfulness into which we are born is one of which we have done nothing to create; an individual cannot be held accountable for the general evil state of society, which inevitably has its warping effect upon his spirit. There is poetic truth in this notion of man as a 'mental traveller', who passes through states not of his own making, and who cannot be blamed because he suffers from ignorance or spiritual blindness.

Moreover, Blake's conception of states has a practical as well as a poetic value, providing a device by which the need for charity is brought home to the imagination. As Karl Barth observes in his commentary to the Epistle to the Romans:

> Our relationship to others, even when we name it a relationship of love, is governed by the law that we should *render evil for evil*. We do not perceive in the other the One—that is, the good which he is not. Rather, we hold him liable for being what he is. . . . This making men liable for what they are is to render them *evil for evil*. . . . It is this failure of apprehension which makes of our whole behaviour an inert mass of evil. Along this line of evil we all, without exception, move.

'To distinguish the Eternal Human', as Blake puts it, is a necessary preliminary to forgiveness, and it is not easy. There has to be an effort of the imagination as well as of the will before there is any disposition to love and forgive our friends and enemies.

In Blake's mythology, deliverance from an evil state can only come by divine grace or human forgiveness, two aspects of the same eternal love and mercy. In *Jerusalem* there are several invocations to the Lamb of God to descend and deliver humanity; but not from sin itself, only from the temptation to brand individual spirits with the mark of sinner:

> 'Descend, O Lamb of God, & take away the imputation of Sin
> 'By the Creation of States & the Deliverance of Individuals
> Evermore. Amen.'

Here is another affirmation of Blake's belief that the divine mission of Jesus was to establish the law of love and the practice of forgiveness in the world of men. Whether or not men accept this everlasting gospel depends upon their capacity for spiritual perception. Caiaphas and Pilate rejected it in history, and those who are like-minded with them reject it to-day. But as Blake observes, giving the devil his due,

> If Moral Virtue was Christianity
> Christ's pretensions were all Vanity,
> And Caiaphas & Pilate, Men
> Praise Worthy . . .

His own claim to be considered a Christian poet rests far more on his comprehension of the temper, the distinctive genius, of the primitive faith, than on his acceptance of orthodox Christian dogma. When, as an old man, he said that 'The Bible was the Book of Liberty and Christianity the sole Regenerator of Nations', it was not of established Christendom that he was thinking, but of the first followers of Jesus who were able to revolutionise society because they not only preached but practised brotherhood.

His attacks on Milton and Dante were largely directed at their self-righteous inability to feel and express the essential temper of Christianity, loving kindness and mercy. He charged them both with misinterpreting Christ's mission and gospel. The God whose ways to man they sought to justify was primarily the Judge Eternal, the dispenser of rewards and punishments. But Blake thought that allegiance to such a deity, with its consequent condemnation of sinners, was a complete perversion of that spirit of love which Jesus displayed and enjoined.

> Whatever book is for Vengeance for Sin & Whatever Book is Against the Forgiveness of Sins is not of the Father, but of Satan the Accuser & Father of Hell.

So he wrote when, as an old man, he was working on his illustrations to *The Divine Comedy;* and the charge holds for *Paradise Lost* as well. Indeed, it is more cogent when applied to Milton's poem, for if Blake had been able to pursue his study of Dante, he must have modified his verdict; the *Inferno* might provoke such a comment, the *Paradiso* could not. Yet there is in the very perfection of Dante's exposition of medieval Christianity something exclusive and forbidding. The supreme poet of Christendom is a singularly un-Christ-like

figure, with his colossal pride and rigidity of moral judgement, and that vindictive streak which made Blake call him 'a mere politician and atheist, busied about this world's affairs'.

No poets could be more dissimilar than these two; Dante, practising the utmost artistic economy, masterly, lucid and clear-cut, moving at ease in a well-mapped universe, availing himself of all the knowledge current among the educated men of his time: Blake, completely undisciplined, self-educated, tangling himself and his readers in makeshift mythology. Yet both set out to serve the cause of Christ. Dante defends the Christian Faith as crystallized by the tradition of the Church through the centuries, but he attacks the corruption of that Church with no less vigour than he uses against the degeneration of the Holy Roman Empire. Blake despises church tradition, and with his visionary's eye and poet's imagination he could risk doing so as most of us cannot; by the sheer force of his religious insight, he is able to bring home to the modern world the significance, the relevance and the potentialities of Jesus and his gospel.

Blake lived through an epoch as bewildering as our own, but he did not succumb to the temptation, which commonly besets the religious man in times of external crisis and conflict, to detach himself from mundane disturbances and to devote himself to the attainment of personal peace by contemplation of the unchangeable. Blake is often called a mystic, but he has little in common with the disciplined ascetic, whether of East or West, who aims at union with God through the rigorous practise of prayer and contemplation. He was not a contemplative, but a seer, blest with astonishing insight; and like the Hebrew prophets, he combined with visionary gifts an intense concern for the salvation of society.

In the sense that he was perpetually aware of the eternal interpenetrating the temporal, he was a mystic; but, consorting familiarly with angels and spirits, he can have felt no inner compulsion to take the ascetic and prayerful way to the knowledge of God. His apprehension of the Divine Vision was singularly immediate; and though his phraseology sometimes suggests gnosticism, sometimes pantheism, his findings are authentically Christian. Endeavouring to reveal the Divine Vision, he uses the symbols of the Divine Humanity, the Universal Family, the One Man, whom he identifies with Jesus Christ; and under these symbols he expresses the essential nature of God as Christ reveals it—that Love which sustains and regenerates and unifies.

> I am not a God afar off, I am a brother and friend;
> Within your bosoms I reside, and you reside in m

Christian and non-Christian mystics alike, who strive by detachment of the self from earthly things to attain the beatific vision or to lose themselves in the ultimately real, are rewarded by the glorious certainty that 'God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all'. But, as Blake observes,

> God Appears & God is Light
> To those poor Souls who dwell in Night,
> But does a Human Form Display
> To those who Dwell in Realms of day.

The Christian Faith is based on the revelation that God is Love and that He is therefore accessible to those who love. 'No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us.' With the concept of Eternal Light as the ground of all being is fused the concept of Eternal Love as the source of all doing. 'We love, because he first loved us.' Such a fusion could only spring from a faith in God made Man; otherwise the impersonality of Light and the personal active quality of Love are, as attributes of God, irreconcilable. When Aquinas says that God is Intelligible Light, he is making an assertion that depends for its force upon the dogma of the Incarnation. Since that dogma stands at the very centre of the faith, Christianity is not, or should not be, an other-worldly religion. 'He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light.'

Blake's religious thinking was authentically Christian because he recognized that love of God is not properly separable from love of man. 'As man is an image of God, in loving the image truly one loves the original; and in loving the original one loves the image in so far as it is a true likeness of the original.'[5] Blake's approach to God is always in terms of loving the image truly; and because he saw in every man 'the human form divine', he could make no distinction between religion and politics.

> Are not Religion & Politics the Same Thing? Brotherhood is Religion. . . .

He, the visionary, the dweller in eternity, cared passionately about his fellow men; his life and works alike testify to that. He did not accept the standards and sanctions of the temporal world, but he knew himself involved in its problems. Far from practising or advocating detachment, he held that 'the unproductive Man is not a Christian' and that 'The Whole Business of Man is the Arts and All Things Common'. Every Christian, in his view, owes two positive duties to society; the duty of forgiveness, and the duty of engaging in 'some mental pursuit for the building up of Jerusalem'.

It is true that an occasional note of political quietism appears in Blake's later writings. In the Public Address which he prepared to accompany his picture of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims, he writes:

> I am really sorry to see my Countrymen trouble themselves about Politics. If Men were Wise, the Most arbitrary Princes could not hurt them. If they are not wise, the Freest Government is compell'd to be a Tyranny. Princes appear to me to be Fools. Houses of Commons & Houses of Lords appear to me to be fools; they seem to me to be something Else besides Human Life.

[5] See *The Mind and Heart of Love.* By M. C. D'Arcy (p. 97).

What he deplored was politics divorced from any consideration of man's relation to God and to his fellow man; party strife that is essentially artificial and barren. It was his firm conviction to the end that a Christian's business is to redeem society through a divine passion for justice and charity.

> Why stand we here trembling around
> Calling on God for help, and not ourselves, in whom God dwells,
> Stretching a hand to save the falling Man?

Just because he knew so intimately and indignantly the degree of man's inhumanity to man, Blake had faith in the coming of God's kingdom; and his vision of the re-establishment of Jerusalem, the city of God, in 'England's green and pleasant land' is one which makes an extraordinary appeal by reason of its immediacy, its linking of the familiar with the apocalyptic. Though nobody now takes literally the myth, which Blake embodies in *Jerusalem,* that ancient Britain was the original earthly paradise and the seat of all ancient wisdom and pure religion, and that the restoration of bliss will be accorded to the British Isles, we are moved by the suggestion that God's kingdom will be established in the places that are familiar to us. Nobody could doubt this who has seen and heard a roomful of English countrywomen singing Blake's song:

> And did those feet in ancient time
> Walk upon England's mountains green?
> And was the holy Lamb of God
> On England's pleasant pastures seen?
>
> And did the Countenance Divine
> Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
> And was Jerusalem builded here
> Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Nostalgia is aroused for something that seems familiar, within their own capacity to experience; it is no far-off Eden or fairy-tale Arcadia that is presented here, but England as it might be and must be. And so, with no feeling of incongruity, they continue to sing:

> Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
> Bring me my Arrows of desire:
> Bring me my Spear: O clouds, unfold!
> Bring me my Chariot of fire.
>
> I will not cease from Mental Fight,
> Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant Land.

One of the great episodes in Blake's last epic is the building by Los and his labourers of Golgonooza, 'the Spiritual Fourfold London, continually building and continually decaying desolate'. As the Spirit of Inspiration labours in eternity, Christians must labour in time to build up the city of God. That is Blake's meaning when he says 'A Poet, a Painter, a Musician, an Architect; the Man Or Woman

who is not one of these is not a Christian': or again, 'The unproductive Man is not a Christian, much less the Destroyer'.

The terms in which he narrates his vision show that it was not merely apocalyptic but had a practical import:

> What are those golden builders doing? where was the burying-place
> Of soft Ethinthus? near Tyburn's fatal Tree? Is that
> Mild Zion's hill's most ancient promontory, near mournful
> Ever weeping Paddington? Is that Calvary and Golgotha
> Become a building of pity and compassion? Lo!
> The stones are pity, and the bricks, well wrought affections
> Enamel'd with love & kindness, & the tiles engraven gold,
> Labour of merciful hands; the beams & rafters are foregiveness:
> The mortar & cement of the work, tears of honesty: the nails
> And the screws & iron braces are well wrought blandishments
> And well contrived words, firm fixing, never forgotten,
> Always comforting the remembrance: the floors, humility:
> The ceilings, devotion: the hearth, thanksgiving.
> Prepare the furniture, O Lambeth, in thy pitying looms,
> The curtains, woven tears & sighs wrought into lovely forms
> For comfort; there the secret furniture of Jerusalem's chamber
> Is wrought. Lambeth! the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, loveth thee.
> Thou art one with her & knowest not of self in thy supreme joy.
> Go on, builders in hope, tho' Jerusalem wanders far away
> Without the gate of Los, among the dark Satanic wheels.

The homely, seventeenth-century quality of the allegory here brings out the practical intention behind Blake's transcription of his dream. The labours of eternity are labours on which men and women of good will are bound to engage.

Golgonooza represents the nearest approach to the city of God that can be built on earth. Jerusalem is indeed restored to Albion, but in the realms of eternity. On earth the perfect society can never be achieved. Blake was under no illusions about that:

> While we are in the world of Mortality we Must Suffer. The Whole Creation Groans to be deliver'd; there will always be as many Hypocrites born as Honest Men, & they will always have superior Power in Mortal Things. You cannot have Liberty in this World without what you call Moral Virtue, & you cannot have Moral Virtue without the Slavery of that half of the Human Race who hate what you call Moral Virtue.

That is why Golgonooza is 'continually building and continually decaying desolate.' But the fact that society never reaches a state of perfection is no argument for abandoning interest in its organization.

> Go on, builders in hope, though Jerusalem wanders far away
> Without the gate of Los, among the dark Satanic mills.

Blake concludes the noble address to the Christians which prefaces the fourth book of *Jerusalem* with the words:

> Let every Christian, as much as in him lies, engage himself openly & publicly before all the World in some Mental pursuit for the Building up of Jerusalem.

Some pursuit, that is, which demands all his highest capacities of mind and spirit; some action that will testify to the divine potentialities of humanity. Far from embracing the romantic notion that the artist is an exotic, Blake felt that all men and women who manifest the gifts of the spirit are artists. When he says, 'Jesus Christ & his Apostles & Disciples were all Artists', it is the inspired quality of their lives that he is emphasizing—the immense spiritual energy that they displayed. That creative energy, however, as Blake always maintained, is the birthright of every human being—the divine principle in man. Those therefore who repress creativeness in themselves and in their fellows blaspheme against the Holy Ghost.

His latest writings, like his earliest, insist that man's foremost religious duty is to cultivate spiritual understandng. What he called in earlier days 'the Poetic Genius' he now names 'the Holy Ghost', but always it is the power of the Creative Spirit that he acknowledges and glorifies.

> Is God a Spirit who must be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth, and are not the Gifts of the Spirit Everything to Man? . . .
>
> Can you think at all & not pronounce heartily That to Labour in Knowledge is to Build up Jerusalem and to Despise Knowledge is to Despise Jerusalem and her Builders.

He castigates 'those Fiends of Righteousness' who insist upon the observance of religious ceremonies and 'pretend Holiness' in spite of bearing ill-will to their fellow men.

> 'I never made friends but by spiritual gifts,
> 'By severe contentions of friendship & the burning fire of thought.
> 'He who would see the Divinity must see him in his Children,
> 'One first, in friendship & love, then a Divine Family, & in the midst
> 'Jesus will appear. . . .

Knowledge of God and love of man go together. Blake desired with all his heart that every man and woman should develop to the full their spiritual capacity, and enjoy the freedom which the artist always claims—'the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the divine arts of the Imagination'. But he knew that such liberty can only be grounded on the law of love. Man cannot achieve his own fulfilment until he deposes Self from the god-like place it occupies in his heart and mind. The readiness to acknowledge imperfection in oneself goes with the readiness to forgive it in one's neighbour.

When love becomes the regulative principle of life, then there will be true freedom, individual and collective. Society will be redeemed by a generous and compassionate love that manifests itself in giving and forgiving. This was Blake's vision; and he gave it an expression that is profoundly Christian:

> Jesus said 'Wouldest thou love one who never died
> 'For thee, or ever die for one who had not died for thee?
> 'And if God dieth not for Man & giveth not himself
> 'Eternally for Man, Man could not exist; for Man is Love
> 'As God is Love: every kindness to another is a little Death
> 'In the Divine Image, nor can Man exist but by Brotherhood.'

Here is full recognition of the mystery of the redemption of the world through Jesus Christ, here is full comprehension of the necessity for imitating him who is 'the Express Image of God'. At the last, as at first, Blake affirms the inseparability of God and Man. In daring to say that Man is Love, he completes the Christian syllogism, which says that God is Love and Man is made in his image and likeness.

DEATH OF THE HEART

I

By these shall love be known:

A rose that lived for light, full-blown
And scentless on the grass
Where suns unheeded pass.

A ship that raced the gale and strove
With wrestling winds for one remembered cove,
Yet drifts becalmed.

A woman armed
For life, defenceless in the force that burns
Within her blood and turns her heart to stone
Uprooting all the blossom she has grown.
More derelict than rose or ship, she lies
Aground.

II

O, unresponsive rose,
An Indian summer burnishes the bush,
And yet you close
Your crimson mouth against the ardent sun,
And hang your head.

So my heart knows
These autumn arrows cannot penetrate
A scar of Spring with love's sweet wound again.
And this is greater anguish than the pain
So scarce endured—
To be inured because the heart is dead.

PHOEBE HESKETH

THE POETRY OF EMILY BRONTË

MARTIN TURNELL

I

EMILY BRONTË'S poetry is not of the same calibre as *Wuthering Heights,* but it is sufficiently impressive to deserve a more detailed critical study than it has yet had. It is a curious fact that the labour and energy which have been expended by editors on the collating and dating of the manuscripts and the elucidation of the Gondal story have been out of all proportion to the interest displayed by literary critics. With the publication of the Hatfield edition of the poetry[1], which is the most accurate and complete that we have or are likely to have, we seem to have arrived at the point where scholarship has told us all it can about dates and manuscripts, and the time is ripe for the critic to try to assess the value of her poetry in terms of literature and to sav something of her achievement as a whole.

The number of imaginative writers who have excelled in more than one literary form is very small, and the number of novelists who have written good poetry smaller still. Now the great writer is not a mere virtuoso who amuses himself by improvising first on one instrument, then on another. When he deliberately chooses after reaching maturity to express himself in more than one form, we must assume that it is because he has something to say in that form which could not be said so well in any other.

Emily Brontë is an interesting example of the problems raised by the novelist who is also a poet, and the critic cannot neglect the relations between her novel and her poetry. Her critics had long been aware that the connection was a close one; recent research has thrown a good deal of light on its nature and has confirmed some interesting speculations. 'It is now shown', wrote the Editors of *Gondal Poems*[2] eleven years ago, 'that several poems, hitherto assumed to be personal, were actually episodes in the Gondal story.' One of the most interesting of recent discoveries was that the two pieces which were previously known as 'The Prisoner' and 'The Visionary' are not separate poems, but part of a long poem belonging to the Gondal saga which was published in full for the first time in *Gondal Poems.* It is evident that the poem was edited by Charlotte, whose handiwork in this as in other directions has been extremely misleading, in order to fit it into the early published collections of her sisters' poetry. Miss

[1] *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë.* Edited from the Manuscripts by C. W. Hatfield: (1941).

[2] *Gondal Poems.* By Emily Brontë. Edited from the Autograph MS. in the British Museum by Helen Brown and Joan Mott: (1938).

Fannie E. Ratchford's note on 'The Gondal Story' in the Hatfield edition takes us much further. There can no longer be any doubt that not merely some, but the bulk of Emily's poems are Gondal poems and that the strictly personal pieces are comparatively few in number. The poems, as they have come down to us, are fragments of a vast epic. The characters and events of the epic are described in much greater detail than before and Miss Ratchford's classification shows how the individual poems fit into its framework.

> Its setting [she writes of the epic], was Gondal, an island in the North Pacific, a land of lakes and mountains and rocky shorelines, with a climate much like Emily's native Yorkshire. Its people were a strong, passionate, freedom-loving race, highly imaginative and intensely patriotic. Politically, Gondal was a confederacy of provinces or kingdoms, each governed by an hereditary ruling family. Between the House of Brenzaida, in the kingdom of Angora, and the House of Exina existed a deadly rivalry which gave direction to the developing play.
>
> When the hardy, far-ranging Gondalan mariners discovered Gaaldine, a large tropical island in the South Pacific, princes of these two families were foremost among the adventurers who explored, conquered, and partitioned it into the kingdoms and provinces of Alexandria, Almedore, Elseraden, Ula, Zalona, and Zedora. Old rivalries and hates went with them, and a goodly number of Emily's poems have to do with the wars of conquest waged by Julius of Brenzaida, King of Almedore, against his Exina neighbours in Zalona.

The epic is concerned for the most part with the adventures of A[ugusta] G[eraldine] A[lmeda]—her designations vary and she is sometimes called Rosina of Alcona—and in particular with her disastrous love affairs with Alexander, Lord of Elbe in Gaaldine, who dies in battle, with Lord Alfred of Aspin Castle who kills himself when she deserts him for Julius Brenzaida who in turn is assassinated. After 'enslaving and betraying a youth named Fernando', Augusta herself, now Queen of Gondal, is slain in battle.

The story of Augusta and her passions for the Gondal warriors bears an obvious resemblance to the story of Cathy and Heathcliff, but the resemblance does not end there. The Gondal saga contains in a different setting all the themes which later make their appearance in *Wuthering Heights*: a mighty, disastrous passion, a desperate hunger for love, feuds between 'rival' houses, imprisonment, exile, betrayal, parting and death.

These discoveries lead to other conclusions. The invention of the Gondals was not, as people once thought, simply an uncommonly intelligent children's game which happened to produce some fine poetry. It was, unconsciously perhaps, the outcome of Emily's desire to relate her experience to a definite scheme. This does not mean that the Gondal poems, which began when she was eighteen, were mere 'prentice work, mere preparation for the novel. The different poems of which the saga is composed were not written in chronological order.

> The poems which Mr. Hatfield here gives to the public for the first time complete and as Emily wrote them [writes Miss Ratchford],

were composed through a period of twelve years, from July 12th, 1836, the summer following her disastrous Roe Head venture, to May 13th, 1848, only six months before her death. Lack of agreement between chronology of composition and story sequence shows that they were not written as progressive plot incidents, but were merely the poetic expression of scenes, dramas, and emotions, long familiar to her inner vision, carried over, no doubt, from her prose creations.

Some of the finest of the poems such as 'Remembrance' (which was Augusta's lament for the death of Julius) were thus written at the time when Emily was actually engaged on *Wuthering Heights* or even later. The fact that most of the poems are Gondal poems does not (as Miss Ratchford's note shows) exclude the view that they were at the same time a vehicle for 'personal' experience. A great writer's experience is always to some extent personal and the characters in the Gondal saga like the characters in *Wuthering Heights* were the symbols through which she chose to express herself, though this naturally does not mean that they had their origin in actual happenings. The experiences were not identical, however, and the poems contain material for which there was no place in the design of the novel.

This is, perhaps, as far as scholarship can take us. It is for the literary critic to discuss the nature of the 'schemes' which are behind the poetry and the novel, the resemblances between Emily Brontë's poetry and her prose style, and the highly original experience which is the staple of the finest poems.

II

The poetry is most easily understood when studied in the light of the novel. Some people have seen in *Wuthering Heights* only a very unusual love story, which has nothing to do with modern problems, but properly understood it is one of the most searching criticisms of contemporary society in nineteenth-century literature. It is a conflict between two ways of life, between the elemental world of Heathcliff and the 'polite' world of the Lintons. Midway between the two stands Cathy who is drawn first in Heathcliff's direction, then in Linton's. Her marriage with Linton is betrayal, is a compromise with a doomed order. It is one of the signs of Emily Brontë's integrity that she does not offer facile solutions. Order is only restored by the removal of the warring elements and the marriage of Catherine and Hareton; but I find it difficult to accept the view that 'the "union between these two" symbolises also the final union of Cathy and Heathcliff'.[3] It seems to me to symbolise the triumph of the polite world and all it stands for.

The meaning of a book is not to be found in its sociology or even in its psychology, but in its *language*. The difference between the

[3] Boris Ford in *Scrutiny* Vol. VII, No. 4: (March, 1939).

two worlds is already suggested by the contrast between Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange:

> The floor was of smooth, white stone; the chairs, high-backed primitive structures painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade.
>
> A splendid place carpeted with crimson, and crimson covered chairs and tables, and a pure white ceiling bordered by gold, a shower of glass drops hanging in silver chains from the centre and shimmering with little soft tapers.

It is a contrast between the austerity and angularity of the elemental world and the soft, stuffy, red plush world of Victorian England. Nelly Dean underlines the differences when, comparing Heathcliff and Linton, she remarks:

> The contrast resembled what you might see in exchanging a bleak hilly coal country for a beautiful, fertile valley.

But there are more striking examples:

> 'I wouldn't be you for a kingdom, then!' Catherine declared emphatically and she seemed to speak sincerely. 'Nelly, help me to convince her of her madness. Tell her what Heathcliff is: an unreclaimed creature without refinement, without cultivation: an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone. . . . He's not a rough diamond—a pearl-containing oyster of a rustic; he's a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man.'
>
> 'I have been so far forbearing with you, sir,' he [Linton] said quietly; 'not that I was ignorant of your miserable degraded character, but I felt that you were only partly responsible for that; and Catherine wishing to keep your acquaintance, I acquiesced—foolishly. Your presence is a moral poison that would contaminate the most virtuous: for that cause, I shall deny you hereafter admission to this house, and give you notice now that I require your instant departure!'

Although both passages are descriptions of the same person, they express two completely different outlooks. Cathy's language has a freshness and directness of its own. It is drawn from the *moors*. Linton's clipped and stilted language is also coloured by his milieu, but the words 'virtuous' and 'moral poison' are mere counters. They retain certain sentimental associations, but they no longer correspond to any genuine *moral experience*. They have nothing of Cathy's individuality. Linton speaks out of the social consciousness of his class. Neither his language nor his feelings are his own: they are ready-made like the speaker. For Linton is a symbol of man as he was coming to be in the nineteenth century.

In another place Heathcliff remarks:

> 'Catherine has a heart as deep as I have: the sea could as readily be contained in a horse trough as her whole affection be monopolised by him.'

This image, which is characteristic, suggests some vast natural force breaking through narrow, artificial barriers and achieving a new freedom. Its function is twofold. It demolishes what is rotten in Linton's world and is the vehicle of a fresh vitality. *Wuthering Heights* is therefore a protest against an unnatural order and an attempt to discover a new order, and this explains Emily Brontë's

preoccupation with nature, which represents a norm of sanity and health, and with metaphysical speculation. The close connection between the two is evident in Cathy's comparison between Linton and Heathcliff:

> 'My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight but necessary. Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff. He's always, always in my mind, not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being.'

This passage is a remarkably successful attempt to translate extremely rarefied perceptions into precise language, and it illustrates the way in which the contemplation of nature prolongs itself in a world of metaphysical speculation which is one of the most notable characteristics of Emily Brontë's style.

It is now possible to say something more of the connection between the 'schemes' behind the novel and the poetry. In the novel the 'polite' world is rejected in favour of the elemental world. This world is not an order in itself. Emily Brontë believes that there is, or ought to be, an order of which it forms part. She is trying to find out what it is and this accounts for the speculative note which runs all through the novel. The 'scheme' behind the poetry bears in some respects a marked resemblance to the elemental world, but it is much simpler. Miss Ratchford has described its political structure in a passage which I have quoted. The moral foundation is heroic, and it is the martial qualities of the Gondals and the ideal of chivalry which are held up to admiration. The conflict arises from the attempts of the characters to fit themselves into this community and the tragedies by their deaths in battle and by Augusta's transgression of the code of chivalry. It is doubled by the conflict in which the poet tries to assess the significance of the Gondal experience in personal terms.

III

One writer has said of Emily Brontë's poetry that 'the mould she pours her mood into was just the simple metres and conventional imagery of the Byronic verse, fashionable in her time.'[4] It is only natural that she should have chosen this form for the more adventurous and least mature of the Gondal poems; but while it is true that a good deal of her early verse is indistinguishable from much other verse written during the same period, it is not true of her mature poetry. It possesses the same qualities as her prose style and is in striking contrast to contemporary nineteenth-century verse. Their freshness and directness make her lyrics very different from the lush nature poems of the Romantic tradition:

> Blow, west wind, by the lonely mound,
> And murmur, summer streams,
> There is no need of other sound
> To soothe my Lady's dreams.

[4] Lord David Cecil in *The Observer*: (30th August, 1942).

Her rhythms have a tautness and vitality which distinguish them from the flaccid rhythms of the later Romantics:

> Death, that struck when I was most confiding
> In my certain Faith of Joy to be,
> Strike again, Time's withered branch dividing
> From the fresh root of Eternity!

The sweep of the third line gives us a vivid sensation of the 'withered branch' being torn asunder and it is difficult to think of many other poets since the seventeenth century who could have handled 'the great abstractions' so effectively or achieved that 'fresh root of Eternity' with its extraordinary conjunction of the damp, earthy, vegetable universe and the visionary 'Eternity'. Indeed, the poet who wrote

> My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels

which shows the same sureness in handling philosophical concepts, is closer to the Donne of

> That one might almost say her body thought

than she is to any other English poet of the nineteenth century, except Hopkins. Her kinship with the Metaphysical Poets is apparent, too, in her treatment of death:

> Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
> Lengthen night and shorten day;
> Every leaf speaks bliss to me
> Fluttering from the autumn tree.
> I shall smile when wreaths of snow
> Blossom where the rose should grow;
> I shall sing when night's decay
> Ushers in a drearier day.

For Emily Brontë, as for the Metaphysicals, death is not an *ending* but a *fulfilment*. A belief in death involves a belief in life, and in this poem the alternation of life symbols and death symbols creates an intricate pattern which is completely unlike the streak of sentimental agnosticism which runs through a typically nineteenth-century poem like *In Memoriam*. 'Night's decay' is one of the fusions of opposites which are characteristic of English poetry in its greatest period and recalls Shakespeare's 'lilies that fester'. But the most significant image is the 'wreaths of snow'. The image of the 'wreath' recurs frequently in her poetry:

> Silent is the House—all are laid asleep;
> One, alone, looks out o'er the *snow wreaths* deep . . .

> I could think in the withered grass
> Spring's budding *wreaths* we might discern . . .

> Then scorn the silly *rose-wreath* now
> And deck thee with the holly's sheen,
> That when December blights thy brow
> He still may leave thy *garland* green.

The snow which is so plentifully scattered through Emily Brontë's poetry is always a symbol of constriction is the alien substance which

smothers life and prevents it from 'blossoming', or kills the blossoms. 'Wreaths' may be either 'garlands' which decorate the tables at a feast or the funeral wreaths which are placed on a grave. The same ambiguity surrounds 'roses' and 'blossoms' which may stand for the fragile beauty of life or the darkness of death. In all these examples we need to be conscious of both meanings. The wreath contains the two opposite ideas of expansion and constriction, of life and death. The 'rose-wreath' is 'silly' because it will wither and is, paradoxically, replaced by the 'garland' of holly. 'Spring's budding wreaths' are fascinating precisely because they are transitory and will return to 'the withered grass' from which they sprang.

In the poetry, as in the novel, nature is the norm of sanity and health which preserves natural human feelings. As her poetry matured, her conception of nature became richer and more philosophical. There is an immense desire to be 'rooted' in nature like the seed which

> Struck deep its roots and lifted high
> Its green boughs in the breezy sky.

This brings us to the personal conflict which is at the heart of Emily Brontë's poetry. It is not a conflict between two orders, but between two opposing tendencies of the mind and its resolution is a necessary preliminary to the resolution of any metaphysical or social conflict. It is well stated in 'To Imagination' (1844), one of the seven poems which Miss Ratchford classifies as dealing with the 'significance of Gondal in Emily Brontë's life':

> So hopeless is the world without,
> The world within I doubly prize;
> The world where guile and hate and doubt
> And cold suspicion never rise;
> Where thou and I and Liberty
> Have undisputed sovereignty.

The conflict is between 'the world without' and 'the world within', the world of external reality and the world of imagination. The problem recurs in another poem. Her latest editor prints the famous lines, 'Oft rebuked, yet always back returning' at the end of the volume with the caption, 'Who Was the Author of this Poem?'. There is no trace of it in the manuscripts and he suggests that it was written by Charlotte who passed it off as Emily's work. The absence of any manuscript version does not appear to me to be conclusive when set against the internal evidence. It is written, with the exception of the Wordsworthian last verse, in Emily's most characteristic manner and is in a different class from any of Charlotte's surviving verse:

> Often rebuked, yet always back returning
> To those first feelings that were born with me,
> And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
> For idle dreams of things which cannot be:
>
> To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region;
> Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
> And visions rising, legion after legion,
> Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

The 'first feelings' refer to the natural, human feelings proper to one living in the poet's surroundings and are contrasted with the 'idle dreams' which refer either to the Gondal poems or to imaginative experience in general. The 'unreal' is a poignant statement of the doubt which runs through her best poems, the tension arising from the suspension between the desire to give herself up to a fascinating experience—we remember the 'visions rise and change which kill me with desire' of another poem—and the fear that she is surrendering to temptation, shrinking from the world of practical experience.

> I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
> And not in paths of high morality,
> And not among the half-distinguished faces,
> The clouded forms of long-past history.
>
> I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
> It vexes me to choose another guide:
> Where the gray flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
> Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

The 'old heroic traces' strengthens the suggestion that the 'idle dreams' refers to the Gondal poems and is contrasted with the peaceful spectacle of the grazing flocks and their assurance that she is walking where her 'own nature would be leading', is indeed asserting 'those first feelings' as the norm.

This experience has its parallel in the Gondal poems where the conflict originates in the rival claims of the world of heroic action and private feelings. This is the theme of 'Remembrance', the finest of all Emily Brontë's poems, in which Augusta mourns Julius:

> Cold in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee!
> Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
> Have I forgot, my Only Love, to love thee,
> Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

These lines are a moving expression of that devouring hunger for love which dominates the whole of Emily Brontë's work. The repeated 'cold', the 'snow' and 'the dreary grave' convey an almost oppressive sense of life being smothered in a frozen immobility. The fourth line is another admirable example of the sweeping rhythm that gives a powerful feeling of people being torn apart. The effect of the poem, however, is cumulative and can only be appreciated by following in detail the changes of tone and feeling as the experience develops. The question that the speaker puts to herself is a genuine and not a rhetorical one, but though she does not know the answer it is already hinted at in her anxiety to stress the hopelessness and finality of Julius' death. It is repeated in the second verse:

> Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
> Over the mountains, on that northern shore;
> Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
> That noble heart for ever, ever more?

The 'heath' and the 'fern-leaves', with their suggestion of approaching spring, come as a relief after the opening lines and lower the

tension. The implication is that her thoughts 'no longer hover' but are at rest, that her doubt is stilled.

> Cold in the earth, and fifteen wild Decembers
> From those brown hills have melted into spring—
> Faithful indeed is the spirit that remembers
> After such years of change and suffering!

The lowering of the tension is continued by the melting of winter into spring and it is linked with the indirect answer to the question asked in the first two verses. 'I have forgotten you a little. I should have been faithful indeed had I not forgotten after all the fresh troubles that have overtaken me during these fifteen long years.'

The next two verses ask his forgiveness for forgetting him and explain the reasons in an attempt to reassure him and herself about her motives:

> Sweet Love of youth, forgive if I forget thee
> While the World's tide is bearing me along:
> Sterner desires and darker hopes beset me,
> Hopes which obscure but cannot do thee wrong.
>
> No other Sun has lightened up my heaven;
> No other Star has ever shone for me:
> All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given—
> All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

She has not forgotten him because she has found another lover, but because of the claims of the world of action. The 'sterner desires and darker hopes' reinforce the 'years of change and suffering' in the third verse and apparently refer to her attempts to place herself on his throne. The effect of the lines depends ostensibly on the poignancy with which youthful love is recalled and the contrast with the cares of middle age; but there is a subtle change of mood and the immense weariness behind the flat 'sterner desires and darker hopes' betrays a secret wish to give in, to have done with politics and responsibility, to slip into the quiet grave.

> But when the days of golden dreams had perished
> And even Despair was powerless to destroy,
> Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
> Strengthened without the aid of joy;
>
> Then did I check the tears of useless passion,
> Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
> Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
> Down to that tomb already more than mine!

There is another change of mood in these lines. The operative word is 'but': she has experienced once more the temptation to give in, and by describing how she avoided it before she is able to assert her will again and to justify her forgetfulness. The verse strikes a note of buoyancy and determination which contrast with the hopelessness of the two previous verses.

And even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in Memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

The last verse is the crux of the whole poem. The speaker admits that she not only has been, but still is sorely tempted to turn her back on 'the empty world', to indulge her emotions instead of disciplining them and applying her energies to the grim claims of the world of practical affairs. It is the courage and determination with which such problems are faced that gives Emily Brontë's poetry its distinctive quality.

A word must be said in closing about another side of Emily Brontë's poetry—the religious side. It is commonly assumed that she was a 'mystic' and almost all her critics have spoken solemnly of her 'vision of ultimate reality'. 'Mysticism' is a word which is capable of exact definition by the theologian, but when used by the literary critic it is almost always a sign of mental indolence, an attempt to give the illusion of precision without the effort required by rigorous thinking. It is true that parts of the poem which used to be called 'The Prisoner' bear a certain resemblance to the writings of some of the Christian mystics, but we must be careful not to confuse the *appearance* with the *content* of experience. There does not appear to be any evidence which would justify us in assuming that Emily Brontë's experience in this poem has anything in common with that of the Christian mystics. Nor, for reasons that I have already given, is there any justification for assuming that phrases like 'the world within' or 'the unreal world' refer to specifically religious experiences. Her habits of mind were not those of the mystic and she has none of the mystic's renunciation of the created world. The emphasis falls properly on 'normality', on her delight in the solid, reassuring world of nature as contrasted with the shadowy world of imaginative experience. Her poetry derives its dramatic intensity from the struggle to harmonise the worlds of internal and external experience, from the courage with which she sifted and tested her experience, the honesty with which she weighed her doubts about its validity and her refusal to be taken in by pseudo-religious experience.

This does not mean that she was not a religious poet at all. I have never felt able to share the general admiration for 'No coward soul is mine'. It has always seemed to me that in this poem she failed to transmute her experience into poetry and has simply given us a statement in verse *about* her religious opinions. The opinions are, however, of considerable interest. There is no doubt that she found the narrow Calvinism of her father's parsonage extremely antipathetic —it is indirectly attacked in the portrait of Joseph in *Wuthering Heights*—because it fettered the natural expansion of human personality as surely as the social order represented by the Lintons. Religion therefore was simply one of the elements in the conflict which dominates the poetry and the novel. It is not the function of the poet to

solve religious or social problems, but to present them imaginatively and the last word is Virginia Woolf's: 'She looked out upon a world cleft in gigantic disorder and felt within her the power to unite it in a book. That gigantic ambition is to be felt throughout the novel—a struggle, half thwarted but of superb conviction, to say something through the mouths of her characters, which is not merely "I love" or "I hate", but "we, the whole human race" and "you, the eterna' powers . . ." the sentence remains unfinished.'

A NOTE ON GRAHAM GREENE

W. H. AUDEN

IN its form, Graham Greene's novel, *The Ministry of Fear* (1943), is a thriller like John Buchan's *Thirty-nine Steps*. The thriller resembles the epic in that its subject is a war between two sides, but there are two important differences. First, the war is a secret undercover struggle. The outsider sees only peace and there are no visible distinguishing marks to show who is friend and who is foe. Second, the reader is made a partisan of one side. In the *Iliad*, even though it is written by Greeks, the Trojans are depicted as equally noble but in a thriller *They*, the enemy, are always bad.

The secrecy is an added excitement, but the partisanship is apt to make the thriller a bit priggish.

As Graham Greene himself says, 'none of the books of adventure one read as a boy had an unhappy ending. And none of them was disturbed by a sense of pity for the beaten side.'

Graham Greene succeeds, I think, in avoiding this crudity without sacrificing the drama, by relating the thriller to another literary form, the allegory. His thrillers are projected into outer melodramatic action of the struggles which go on unendingly in every mind and heart. Maybe this is why we like reading thrillers because each of us is a creature at war with himself. Further he is a self-deceptive creature who thinks he is feeling one thing or acting from one motive when his real feeling and motive are quite different.

There is, therefore, not a good side and a bad, nevertheless it does matter who wins. Again victory does not finally solve anything. A dangerous attack has been defeated, perhaps we understand ourselves a little better: that is all. A future, as difficult as before, perhaps more so, still remains.

Graham Greene, then, employs a distinctive form: he also exhibits a distinctive concern. Just as Balzac came back again to avarice and Stendhal to ambition, so, in book after book, Graham Greene analyses

the vice of pity, that corrupt parody of love and compassion which is so insidious and deadly for sensitive natures.

The secret war in *The Ministry of Fear* is between those who pity and those who can bear pain—other people's pain endlessly, the people who don't care. Yet both sides have a common bond; both have murdered. Arthur Rowe, the hero, has killed his wife to save her suffering from an incurable illness. Through his encounters with Hilfe, the Fascist agent, he is brought to realize that 'it was her endurance and her patience which he had found most unbearable. He was trying to escape his own pain, not hers.'

Behind pity for another lies self-pity, and behind self-pity lies cruelty.

To feel compassion for someone is to make oneself their equal; to pity them is to regard oneself as their superior and from that eminence the step to the torture chamber and the corrective labour camp is shorter than one thinks.

For providing us with such exciting reading and at the same time exposing so clearly a great and typical heresy of our time, Graham Greene deserves our lasting gratitude.

SUMMER DROUGHT

Night comes: with a limp hand smoothes the dry hair
Of hedges, lowers children's cries
But tacks an echo to their footbeats where
The pavements crack for moisture, hides the brown
Killed grass and wraps a shrubbery round
The blackbird with his bill like Cheshire cheese.

But it is not the blackbird's song I now recall
Under this piece of sky that comes up like a bruise,
But the corncrake grating through endless afternoons
When, hot from rabbiting and wild with a new friend,
I lapped up springing water in my hand,
Then pounded home like a harrier, dreading next day's school.

I have never heard it since, and hardly listened then.
Now memory, all too fertile at this arid time,
Makes it a wooden rattle, an alarm.
And if, after all, it sounded,
I could not bear it telling me, oh, again
What all my hot days mean only when they are ended.

GORDON SYMES.

DASTURI

D. C. RICE

THE Teso detachment did not like their sergeant-major. He was a Sudanese, a man of determined character, whose body, though large much beyond the average, had a quality of self-confident restraint in its movements; he was like an outsize piece of machinery which by its nonchalant efficiency always gave the impression of further hidden reserves of power. Even his black-linoleum skin seemed well greased, and his nose, large and broad, like a relaxed muscle.

In contrast, the Teso standing easy in their three lines, with small pillbox caps at varying angles on their heads, bodies eternally round-shouldered and bandylegged in the khaki drill, and abnormally big boots, had the air of a band of apes clapped into uniform on a misinterpreted order from headquarters.

Corporal Thadeo, beside the sergeant-major, regarded the men and thought: yes, it is very difficult to become enthusiastic over such as these—how he must hate them! For the Sudanese was of an old strain of blood made proud by the chosen discipline of wars, and after a life passed in the King's African Rifles to be placed in charge of these men could not but seem an insult to him. Certainly, he showed them little mercy on the parade-ground

Even if treated with sympathy, however, it is not probable the Teso would ever be easy to drill, for they were unpredictable material; their reactions to discipline inclined to the erratic and bizarre. On several occasions, when they were marching away from the two men and the sergeant-major called out the further command to wheel or about-turn, they had affected not to hear and continued straight on, like a squad of docile maniacs on whom one order had at last fully registered and who were raptly intent on following it through to its conclusion. Their ultimate dignified disappearance into the bush of the Athi plains only a miracle or the perspiring and outraged Corporal Thadeo could prevent.

Thadeo's eye rested on the two lance-corporals in the front rank, one at each end of it. The squad had improved a little in the few days they had been with it. They, as Thadeo, were Jaluo, ex-Kenya-Police; they stood out at once from among the Teso, not only by the bayonets they carried, but also because the dignity of which these were the symbol was a conscious part of their bearing. Thadeo watched them with quiet pleasure; they reassured him.

Beside him, the Sudanese gave a sudden exclamation of disgust. Thadeo turned his head and saw the other averting his eyes from the Teso.

'Effendi?'

The Sudanese glanced up. There was a momentary expression of relief on his face as he noted the corporal's deferential attentiveness,

the exaggerated smartness of his posture (for though they were standing easy Thadeo held his body taut, his legs as rigid as the black scabbard of his bayonet). The sergeant-major looked back at the Teso and shifted the polished brown cane with its embossed silver head from under his left arm. Thadeo's eyes followed each movement of the cane; the sun glinted on it as the Sudanese drew it lightly through his fingers.

'I don't know if we'll ever make soldiers of them, Corporal. Except for your two policemen they look worse than ever this morning.'

'Yes, Sergeant-major. There's fresh trouble among them. Many say they don't like it here. They want leave to go back to Uganda.'

The Sudanese gave a short laugh. 'Back to their wives, I suppose,' he said loudly, and some of the men looked up. 'Don't like Kenya! And who are they to make judgements? What does it matter where you are—it's always still the Army, isn't it?'

'True, sir.'

'Ah, these Teso! And, by heaven, they're only Pioneers—they don't even have to go into action!'

He replaced the cane beneath his left arm.

'Squadee!'

The men, without interest or alacrity, came to the at ease position. A cloud of fine dust rose about their feet and hung half-heartedly in the air. Two or three of the men coughed.

The Sudanese stiffened suddenly and held the cane more tightly to his side; his eyes were on one of the men in the second rank. Thadeo followed his gaze; ah, Private Obelele, he said to himself, Private Obelele again. The man, short and powerfully built, was stooping slightly, his hands on his hips. He looked up at the Sudanese and back at the ground. He hunched his shoulders as though uncomfortable beneath the regard fixed on him, but he made no attempt to correct his position. Thadeo had seen in his face a look of obstinacy, almost of direct challenge.

The sergeant-major called out:

'Private Obelele!'

The man looked up again.

'Private Obelele! Why are you standing there like a damned shenzi of a recruit? Are you deaf?'

'I am sick.'

'I am sick, *sir!*'

'I am sick, sir.'

The Sudanese began to walk towards him, and Thadeo said to himself, 'they haven't much endurance; I suppose he'll say we've been here too long in the heat or something.' Indeed, Thadeo could feel the sun on the back of his neck, like an iron hand. He knew the Sudanese must have felt it too, but he was not surprised at the contempt in the other's words as he took Obelele by the arm:

'Sick! Well, you'd better fall out then. Soldiers, are you? Women, rather!'

From where he was, Thadeo saw the private's mouth harden. The man stepped back suddenly, straightened himself, and swung his fist. The Sudanese fell against the men behind him, and they turned round quickly. The others in the front rank came in from either side and stopped in two rough lines which closed on him like arms from behind, for his back was towards them; he had recovered his balance and was watching Obelele. He said nothing, but put his hand from time to time to his mouth. Thadeo, at first, had not moved; now he ran in and entered the corridor of men; they were curiously silent.

He stopped next to the sergeant-major.

'Are you all right, effendi?'

He was surprised how loud his voice sounded, but the Sudanese did not seem to hear; he was still watching Obelele. The man was standing quite still, by himself, for those on either side of him had moved away; otherwise that and the rank behind were still unbroken.

Obelele began to look quickly from side to side at his companions. There was a sudden gush of words in Teso from the man on his left; through excitement his voice was very high-pitched, and it grated on the ear like the tearing whine of an electric saw; then, as he felt the Sudanese's eyes turn to him, the soundstream cut off without dropping in tone, disturbingly. The Sudanese looked back slowly at Obelele, who glanced away at once and ran the pink tip of his tongue over his lips, then brought his body with a kind of desperate smartness to attention.

As though this were a signal which at last released him for action, the sergeant-major swung round to Thadeo, and called out to the two lance-corporals. They had remained in their positions; now as they ran in the Teso began to talk in ominous undertones. Some of them moved slightly and got in the way, but in doing so their actions were still rather non-committal; it was clear that they had not yet decided quite what to do. When the two police halted in front of him, the sergeant-major opened his mouth to speak, but something seemed to catch in his throat; he coughed, turned his head, and spat out some blood. Thadeo heard some of the Teso laugh. My God, he thought, damn them, damn them. He saw the Sudanese press gently at the side of his mouth with his tongue; two little strips of flesh, like knotted string, projected unexpectedly from between his lips. As though there were something shameful about this sight the Sudanese shut his mouth quickly. Then he cleared his throat and said loudly, so that all could hear:

'Arrest this man! Take him to the guard-tent at once!'

The lance-corporals turned to Obelele, and at this the rest of the men broke all semblance of order and swarmed round those in the centre. None of the Teso carried arms, but as the police came towards him Obelele stepped back and pulled off his filled waterbottle. He held it by the strap and swung it viciously.

The nearer of the two, half-stunned, fell on one knee, and his

companion bent and helped him up. For a moment they stood without movement, watching Obelele. A shout of approbation went up from the other Teso, and Obelele looked about him and grinned. Some of the other men began to unstrap their waterbottles. The Sudanese shouted 'Stop it! Stop it! You don't know how this will end!' But the Teso took no notice. Several were swinging their waterbottles experimentally, and one bunch of them were mimmicking what had happened, elaborately overacting, while those round them applauded and held their stomachs in laughter.

The two lance-corporals had fallen back till they, with the Sudanese and Thadeo, formed a little group half-surrounded by the men. The Teso's mood had changed abruptly; now they were calling to one another in loud angry voices, as though trying to work themselves up to some further form of action. Some moved round to close the gap in their circle, and above them Thadeo could see astonished heads emerging from the line of tents at the edge of the parade-ground. He looked at the two police with him; bewildered, they were watching the sergeant-major intently.

Draw your bayonets!'

The sounds of the three bayonets, his own and the others', coming from their scabbards; kriss-kriss, rising notes; rasped and overlapped in Thadeo's ears. There was a shout from the Teso, and the voice of Obelele continued above the rest; then he was walking alone towards the four men, swinging his waterbottle. He stopped in front of the sergeant-major and brought back his hand, and Thadeo stepped neatly behind him, like a ballet-dancer in a well-rehearsed sequence, and struck upwards.

A long sigh, in decrescendo, came from the men, as from a film-audience which felt it had had its money's worth. Obelele fell forward on to his knees, his hands hanging loosely. He turned his head slowly from side to side, suspiciously, like one disturbed at prayer, then, with deliberation, he placed his left hand on the ground in front of him, took his weight upon it, and felt round with the other for the cut in his back; his fingers found it and began trying to pinch the edges together. After a few moments he sighed gently; his body relaxed and slid forward.

The Teso in their circle did not move, but looked silently from the man on the ground to the corporal with his bayonet. Shouts and quick disconnected movements came from the area about the tents; jarring, as from an alien plane of existence. Presently from this direction men began to run towards the still circle, King's African Rifles' askaris and three or four white officers. On the other side, away in the distance across the rare bursts of forest, the green Ngong hills stuck out of the earth like redundant witnesses.

* * *

In the Military Hospital the dying Obelele lay on his side watching the white-dressed men and women moving swiftly about him, speak-

ing their quick English which he could not understand. Aaie, why did I do it, why did I do it? he thought: Oh! that I had not done it, then I could go back one day to the village, to Bukeddi. I would see my wife and my children, I would see Alilat my friend. Ah, Alilat . . . when we became blood-brothers! His mind slipped back pleasantly to that time. He himself was of the Ngonge, the Otter, clan, Alilat of the Leopard. He had been proud, for though Alilat was the younger he was a beautiful man and the strongest wrestler in seven villages. The two had sat opposite each other on the strip of barkcloth, with their clans' representatives at their sides, and one of these took the ceremonial coffee-bean and cut it. Obelele could hear, away out of sight in the harsh sunlight, the braying call of a plantain-eater somewhere in the trees. The bigger part of the bean, he remembered, rolled over from the knife towards Alilat, who picked it up and looked at it. He smiled and said, mine shall be the greater sacrifice! Then each pinched up the skin of his stomach, cut it, bathed his piece of coffee-bean in the blood and handed it on his open palm to the other, who took and swallowed it whole. And they went together to the sacred feast, calling each other *munygniwe,* brother. O my brother! he said aloud now, remembering, and feeling his body moved so that pain arched through it from the touch like swift bitter love, O my brother! And the doctor, bending above the splendid back, said in jerky Swahili, what is it? what is it?

II

Two years later at the giant pioneer depôt in Quassassin, Egypt, Thadeo, the recently-promoted sergeant-major, walked slowly along a line of Teso formed up for morning tea. He looked like a general. The creases on his shorts were beautiful to behold; to imagine these stiff perfect lines broken even by hard marching would have been almost indecent. The badge of his slouch-hat shone brightly, as, at the other end of his body, did the immaculate boots. He stopped a moment and regarded the perfection of his toe-caps. An early fly settled on one of them and he flicked it away with his cane; the tip glanced over the polished surface, leaving a small dark stain. He frowned and, lifting the cane, passed it slowly through his fingers. Suddenly his hands stopped, the brown cane between them, and he smiled down at its silver head. He looked back at the Teso; no, *they* hadn't changed; they never got any better. Though this was a new lot, recently conscripted from Uganda; they'd taken him away from that detachment in Kenya, of course, after it happened. Well, it had only been his duty—yes, in the just execution of his duty, the Court of Inquiry had said afterwards. And quite right too—it was no good being weak with these Teso. After all, order had to be maintained to the end, whatever the cost. That was a matter of custom.

He sighed. Nearly two years in this place, he said to himself, and then to end up with Teso again. Oh! to be back with my own

Jaluo! Well, it would all finish one day. It would be wonderful to go back to Kenya after this desert, in which nothing grew, where even the people were without colour—they were strange people, not natives, not Europeans; in the towns you caught them looking at you from alleys, from behind the counters of their shops, with evil in their eyes.

Sometimes, when he was off duty, Thadeo walked to the edge of the camp and looked across the sand to the thin sheath of green which hid the Sweetwater Canal. In Kenya now there were the Rains . . . inside the hut there were long moving shadows from the fire in the centre, and you smelt the bitter blue woodsmoke which gathered in a thick cloud below the roof; some escaped through the hole there, and sometimes a thin glistening line of rain found its way through the break and slanted down into the fire, and the wood hissed and sang, and the great shadows leapt from side to side on the circling walls like rainmakers in a dance of triumph. You knew somehow the fields would be very fertile that year, and all the time the rain fell on the roof and on the earth with a heavy good sound. I shall walk through those lands one day, after the rains, he thought, and when I reach home they will run out from the huts and they will look at me and call my name. I shall lift up my son and his fingers will touch the ribbons on my chest, the crown on my sleeve, and all about me the people will be glad and in the fields the crops will indeed be very green—

His mind came back abruptly to one of the Teso in the queue, and he clicked his tongue in disgust. Look at that now, he thought; carrying a greatcoat over his arm! doesn't he know yet that's against correct fatigue-dress?

He walked up to the man and tapped him on the shoulder with his cane.

'You now!' he said. 'What's your name?'

The big Teso did not turn round; he stared straight ahead, as though he had not heard. But he opened his lips and answered very softly.

'What is it?' said Thadeo. 'What is it?'

'Alilat.'

'Alilat, *sir!*'

'Alilat, sir!'

At once, as he began to reprimand the man, Thadeo felt vaguely troubled. The private was still staring ahead; only his quickened breathing showed he was listening.

'You understand?' Thadeo finished. 'Damned shenzi of a recruit!'

And again he felt subtly disturbed, for it was his practice never to swear at his men.

The private turned round very slowly and faced him, and without thinking Thadeo stepped back. In the background he could hear the usual chuckles from some of the others in the queue, but he was not comfortable. The man was looking at him in a strange way, as

though he had known him for a very long time, as though he might, if he wished, claim the recognition of some bond of intimacy. Thadeo, with a curious hurrying sense of guilt, cast back in his own memory, but the man's face was unreflected there. Then quite suddenly the familiar-spirit's knowledge in the eyes was shuttered, and with a swift motion the man threw his greatcoat over Thadeo's head. In the split second in which Thadeo saw the coat coming and instinctively threw up his hands, he had a most powerful impression that all this had happened before, and he felt on the very brink of understanding; but the coat settled about his head like a black cloud of locusts. He cried out, then further blackness, in quick bursting pain, came on him.

* * *

Alilat bent over the body. The coat had come away, and he continued to beat at Thadeo's head with the iron-shod cudgel. He was talking to the figure, insulting it in Teso as he struck. Then, as though what he saw surprised him, he stopped motionless above the figure, his body from feet to poised cudgel arched as in a group of statues. His arm came down very slowly to his side and he looked up at the men. The cudgel dropped on to the sand and he turned and began to run. When he stopped he could no longer see them, but he could hear their cries, thin and clamorous, like wild birds disputing. He looked at his hands, and, lifting his tunic at the sides, wiped the palms on the rough fabric of the trousers. He sat down on his heels and lowered his head on to his crossed arms.

III

Morgan, the O.C., was at his office desk writing when the British Orderly Sergeant came in.

'Excuse me, sir—there's a Teso private wants to see you. He says he's just struck his S.M.—it's Thadeo—At the morning tea-parade it was, sir'.

'The S.M.'s Thadeo, is it? Where is he?'

'The private, sir? He's here, outside. Will you see him?'

'No, I don't think so. Not now. Put him in the guard-tent—and send for Thadeo, sergeant; I'll see him first.'

The sergeant went out and Morgan returned to his files; he half-heard the man carrying out his orders in the other part of the tent. When he had been working for some time he looked at his watch. He got up and walked through to the sergeant.

'Sir?' the man pushed back his chair.

'Thadeo not come yet?'

'No, sir'. The sergeant went to the flap and looked out. 'There's no sign—I sent an askari for him at once, sir.'

'It doesn't matter. Oh, I'm going over to breakfast. I shan't be long—tell him to wait for me, will you?'

He began to walk to the mess. The sun was above the Swazi lines to his left, and the shadows of the tents were tall and neat, pointing towards him. In the sun by one of the wooden wash-houses an askari was kneeling next to a basin of water, scrubbing his webbing on a piece of board. His head was bent over; it was shaven bald, and the back of it shone. It looked strangely fragile. He was whistling the first few bars of 'Lili Marlene', over and over, with a kind of aggressive concentration, as though it were part of his task. He glanced up at Morgan, then past him. He returned with passionate vigour to his webbing. Morgan smiled; all right, he said to himself, so you didn't see me.

There were a few officers in the mess; Ward, the D.A.P.M., was at one of the small tables and Morgan went over to him.

'Mind if I join you?'

'No, of course not, sir; please do'. Ward stood up with a jerky movement and one hand brushed his egg-cup and knocked it over. He gave an exclamation of annoyance and coloured slightly, but he waited till Morgan was seated before he picked up the egg; some of the yolk had run out on to the plate, and Ward moved it in little quick scoops to the side, holding the spoon in two fingers, at the extreme end.

'What are the eggs like?' said Morgan, conversationally.

'Oh, they're all right, sir. I had mine boiled—it's always so much safer—you can tell straight away if they're off.'

'Mm. Well, I'll follow your example.'

Yes, that was a safe limited attitude towards eggs, towards life—and why not? he thought; it was right for Ward: there was no romantic recklessness in ordering unpredictable scrambled eggs about him.

The mess-boy came back, a tall Jaluo, the tribal scars clear on his cheeks. He was dressed in a dark fez and white kanzu, with a broad crimson cummerband about his waist. He brought Morgan two shiny brown eggs on a plate; there was an enormous self-important wooden egg-cup, decorated with a camel and a mustard-coloured pyramid. Into this imposing pulpit Morgan introduced one of the eggs and banged it cheerfully with his spoon. It splintered with a satisfying crunch.

He heard someone say 'Oh, sir—' and he looked up. It was Dawson, one of the M.O.'s, a very young man who had come straight into the army on qualifying.

'Yes, doctor?'

Dawson hesitated.

'Good morning, sir.'

Morgan raised his eyebrows. 'Good morning, doctor. Come and sit here.'

'Thank you, sir.' But he remained standing. 'I've—you know about the S.M., of course, sir?'

'Who, Thadeo? Oh yes. Do sit down. Have your eggs boiled—

Ward tells me that's the best way. Yes, I must see to Thadeo after breakfast.'

'What is this about Thadeo, may I ask?' said Ward.

'Oh, nothing much,' Morgan replied, 'Trouble with him and the new Teso. One of them hit him.'

Ward cleared his throat. 'An annoying business,' he stated, as though summing up for a jury. 'But that sort of thing tends to happen up here, of course?'

Morgan glanced at him and returned to his egg, smiling to himself. He began to peel off the cracked shell, and a little of the white oozed onto his fingers. He swore mildly and wiped them on the edge of the plate. While he was putting his hand down for his napkin it struck him that Dawson had still not moved. What's the matter with the man? he thought. And why on earth is he looking at me with that air of rooted horror?

'You all right, Dawson?'

The man started.

'Yes, sir. Yes, of course.'

He sat down rather gingerly and looked straight ahead at the tent wall. After a minute he said:

'There will be a Court-martial?'

'What's that? Oh, Thadeo again! Yes, I suppose so. My God, more work!'

Dawson did not reply. After a minute Ward said.

'I suppose you're afraid of being put on the Inquiry, doctor!' He gave a disturbing squeal of laughter, and both men looked at him. Dawson said slowly.

'No I hadn't thought of that.' He turned to Morgan. 'And he'll be buried here too?'

'Buried! Buried, man? What d'you mean?'

'Well, you did say—you do know he's dead, sir?'

'Good God, is he? Thadeo? Dead! No, I didn't know!' He averted his eyes from Dawson and repeated awkwardly, 'No, I didn't know, of course I didn't know. How did it happen?'

'I don't know who did it,' said Dawson. 'They stopped talking when I got there. They wouldn't say anything.'

'I don't mean that! I know who did it; I've got him in the guard-tent.'

'Oh,' said Dawson. 'Oh.'

'Stop looking at me like that, man! *I* didn't do it! Tell me what happened.'

Dawson made a nervous movement with his hand, pushing the palm outwards towards Morgan. He brought it back quickly to the edge of the table. He said, 'Yes, sir. Well, his head was beaten in. Some sort of club I suppose, sir. He was quite dead when they called me.'

After awhile Morgan said softly, almost to himself, 'I see, yes, I see; so that is why. I should have understood.' He looked down at

the second egg; he was still holding the spoon above it. He put it down very quietly on the plate.

* * *

The night before the execution Morgan was sitting in his tent. There was a whisky-and-soda on the small table in front of him; he had been watching it for some time. A flake of grit lifted at irregular intervals on a thin rope of bubbles and then fell in a series of arcs, like a leaf, to the bottom, there to be seduced by slowly-gathering bubbles into continuing on its unpurposive career. He frowned and looked away from it, round the tent.

There was a certain incongruous air of the city's bachelor-flat about the tent; its aids to comfort were of the same order of rather brisk functionalism. A collapsible washing-stand fitted neatly into one corner, a plain sideboard in another. The floor was roughly-planked, covered with camel-hair rugs, and, on the other side of the table, their faded backs towards him, were three thinly-padded camp-chairs, resolute masculine affairs with hard arms and no nonsense about them, arranged automatically in a semi-circle round the unlit electric fire, like old military gentlemen at a club. A blank partition behind him masked his bed and the two unplaned depôt-made cup-boards. But the long well-filled bookcase with its passive comment on Morgan's mind, and the prints hanging from safety-pins on the walls, denied the tent its anonymity.

Ward should be coming in fairly soon, he thought, his hands on the glass; it was octagonal at the base, and he turned it round slowly, his thumb and middle finger on opposite sides, sliding neatly and always parallel from plane to plane. He had noticed Ward vaguely about the mess for some weeks before he first had occasion to speak to him. Except for his behaviour with tea at breakfast (he always ordered it strong, without milk, from the mess-boy; in English, rather aggressively) Ward was not impressive, and Morgan had felt no desire to probe speculatively beneath the tight-drawn appearance and find out what held it together—life was too short, he thought, to do that except to a few selected people, and then one had to be so careful not to read more into them than was really there.

He heard nails brushing against the fabric of the tent-flap, and Ward's voice called out:

'Are you there, sir?'

'Yes, come in.'

Ward hooked the flap behind him and came down the three steps on to the sunken floor.

'I think I've done everything, sir.'

'Good. Sit down—something to drink? Whisky-soda?'

'Thank you, sir.'

Morgan pulled round one of the camp-chairs for him and switched on the electric-fire, which warmed up slowly to its habitual bright insincere glow. He came back from the sideboard with the glass.

'How are the Teso lines? Has any news of tomorrow leaked out?'

'Not as far as I know, sir. I went and saw their new S.M. this evening. He says they're fairly quiet.' He added, his voice turned reassuring and a little pompous, 'But there's no real danger from them. They wouldn't dare to do anything now.'

Morgan laughed. 'I wouldn't be too certain. I assure you, I'm not being nervous at nothing—they're not very civilized, you know. No; we don't want any trouble from them. We don't want them to know a thing till it's all over. He'll only know himself in the morning when I promulgate the sentence.'

But he knows already, of course, he said to himself. Not that he dies tomorrow, but that he is to die—this much he knows. Morgan had not (thank God, he thought) been on the Court, but he had seen Alilat three times since the trial, and the Teso held the knowledge of death in his eyes and mouth; without protest, almost without interest. But once as he was turned to be marched away his face had come alive and he had glanced round covertly at Morgan, as if he expected to surprise a reflection of that knowledge in the other's eyes.

'He deserves to die, of course,' Ward said resolutely.

'Look!' said Morgan tartly: 'So he may, in the abstract. But after all, the man's a human being.'

Ward looked down in some confusion at his glass. In a few moments he said, with the tone of one making a concession:

'It must certainly have been terrible to live for two years, knowing all the time—'

'Yes,' said Morgan, 'Yes.'

After awhile he noticed that Ward had not touched his drink, but was just sitting staring at the fire. He lifted his own glass.

'Cheers!'

Ward looked round quickly.

'What's that? Oh! Cheers, sir.'

'By the way,' said Morgan, 'You did arrange about the mass?'

'Yes, sir. I saw Father Darrel. The man is to be marched over to him as soon as you've read the sentence.'

For two years, he thought. Ever since the habari of his blood-brother's death came to him in Bukeddi—had he decided by himself to kill Thadeo, or had the clan elders sat round him in a circle one night in a dark hut and recited his duty to him like a premature sentence of death? But when it was determined, how often did you rehearse it all in your mind before at last you saw the man and said to yourself, so that is the face, so that is the face . . .

Out of the corner of his eye he saw Ward jerk his head back and look at the light. If you were just sitting in the tent, sooner or later the light always succeeded in forcing itself on your attention. The electricity came from the depôt's generating system, and when you had at last become conscious of the light you realized that you could distinguish its tiny beats; that all the while it had been shooting

little waves into the tent with a kind of thudding persistence. If you thought about it too much it gave you an ugly sensation of oppression and futility. Morgan, too, despite himself, glanced up. Perhaps it's the shade that makes it so bad, he thought; I really must get it changed. It was of shiny white porcelain, broad and circular; it hooded the light like the reflector above an operating-table and thrust it down in a cone about the two men.

He looked away with an effort and said:

'There's that mess-dance tonight. Are you going on to it?'

Ward looked at him and said quite angrily:

'I, sir? Tonight? No!'

Well, get away with you! thought Morgan. One has to talk, one has to say something!

That night the mess was returning a dance to the nurses of one of the big hospitals nearby, and, thinking of it, Morgan realized that he would be expected to put in an appearance there for a few minutes. It was being held in the NAAFI hall; they had decorated it with streamers and paper-lanterns. By now the party would be past self-consciousness, the bar well-patronized, some of the officers sitting with their arms round their partners. From time to time laughter would cut up like shafts of light into the cushion of tobacco smoke hanging beneath the low ceiling. Always the mess-boys would be watching with their veiled polite expressions. Oh God, no! he thought suddenly.

Ward had moved his glass; where Morgan had first put it down there was a circle of moisture, not quite closed. Ward was leaning above it, his sharp profile like an uneasy terrier's. He remained like that for some minutes, not moving. It was as though he were listening for something; and soon Morgan, watching him, felt the light-waves fill his own mind till he could almost hear them.

Ward put his hand out very slowly and drew the two ends of the circle together. He said: 'I've never done this before. I've never seen a man killed.'

His tone was quite plaintive, and so unlike his usual that Morgan felt a quick vindictive urge to laugh at him. But he was more in sympathy with him now, and he replied. 'No, nor have I, this way. I'm not regular army either, you know. Though I was with native troops in the last war.'

'Oh,' said Ward. 'But you *are* from Kenya, aren't you?'

Morgan smiled. 'Good Lord!' he said, 'Do you really think that makes so much difference? Yes, I'm from Kenya—at least, I've spent most of my life there—in the Administration, you know. It's a nice country. Have you ever been to it?'

Ward did not answer at once. Then he said 'No sir' mechanically, as though the topic had already lost interest for him. He finished his drink.

'Thank you, sir. Goodnight.'

'Goodnight.'

But when Ward reached the flap he turned back.

'I hope it will be all right.'

'Yes, yes!' said Morgan in sudden irritation. 'Of course it will be all right!'

* * *

Morgan, however, did not sleep well. He lay on his back and above him the mosquito-net rose to a small hoop suspended from the roof; since the sides sloped inwards there was an impression of great height within the net, so that he seemed to be looking up inside a dim conical tower. White reinforcing ribbon spiralled upwards; his eye, again and again, followed it round and round to the top. Perhaps if you could only understand, there was some answer, some reason, but if you could not find it you had to keep along the grooves, up and up to the climax, without thinking too much. But the sensation of time closing in on him came through the tiny meshes of the net and geared into the spirals; it moved up them in little jumps, with the blind inevitability of the wavebeats of the depôt's lights. He came to see how the time ahead of each jump held treacherous value; each unit in its new importance was priceless against the future, yet each was caught at both ends in the chain, an infinity to be borne.

When the alarm clock rang beside his bed he dressed and went out. Above him, the full moon seemed excessively large and bright; it revealed everything about him, even the pocked holes in the sand from a rare desert shower. In this light the holes were important; they were neat and deliberate, like small perfect tunnels made by bees. He looked up. The many tents ranged in their patterns seemed fined down to the same extreme clarity, as though seen through the wrong end of a telescope; but the regularity of their individual shapes, the merciless order of their lines, addressed him across the waste sand. He walked on quickly to the Detention-Barracks.

Ward was already in the office marquee.

'Everything ready?'

'Yes, sir. They should be here in a few minutes.'

The D.B. was not favoured with electricity. There were two hurricane-lamps in the tent, one hanging on the central pole, the other on a desk. Morgan sat down behind this, and turned his chair to face the entrance.

Ward had come to the other side of the desk and was standing there irresolutely.

'There's nothing more you want me to do, is there, sir?'

Morgan glanced at him. 'No, no,' he said. 'Just wait. It will be all right.'

Ward went back to a corner of the tent and Morgan looked down at the piece of paper in front of him. He did not read it through; he felt he already knew its contents by heart. From the lamp's frame a shadow fell on the paper, cutting down and across it.

He glanced at his watch: it was five minutes to five. He looked

back at the lamp, and heard them coming when they were still a long way off; their boots had sounded quite plainly over the strip of stony ground by the barbed-wire, in brief compelling beats, then the sound broke off at the broad ring of soft sand about the tent.

They came in. Briggs, the British S.M., marched them to the desk.

Alilat stood between the two African M.P.s. His size dwarfed them, made them and their rifles insignificant; yet his body held no threat, the surface of his eyes was negative. Morgan tried to read some meaning into the face, to cover it with some definition, but it admitted no connection with him. The Nilotic features seemed now too regular, too perfect; the errors of identity were gone. The fact that his body breathed still and could move and obey and feel pain seemed some form of grotesque mistake. Is it then easier to be brave, thought Morgan suddenly, when you the mind have nothing more to do? Is it then more wise to bow your head? But he himself could only look with a kind of envy at the native, and when Alilat, whose gaze had been fixed some feet above Morgan's head, looked down at him, he felt with a shock the certainty of his exclusion from that world.

He picked up the paper, and the cross slid easily from it. He began to real aloud in Swahili. A moth was banging its head with emphatic suicidical persistence against the glass of the lamp on the desk; the sound punctuated the periods in his voice with inane exclamation-marks and denied all sense of tragedy.

When he had finished, Alilat repeated. 'Shot—this morning at sun-up?' He swallowed. 'Very well, sir. I should like to have a letter written to my family.'

'Your family?' (he checked his surprise immediately. There I go again! he thought; yes, of course, why shouldn't there be other people?)

He went on. 'But mass is to be said for you in a few minutes.'

'But the letter, sir? I shall have time afterwards?'

'Yes, afterwards.'

Briggs, at the tent door, came forward.

'March him over now, sir?'

'Yes, Sergeant-major, take him over.'

The three men marched to the tent door, ducking their heads through it, Briggs behind them. Morgan got up.

'Come over with me a moment, Ward. I'd like to see if everything's all right.'

They walked over together. Ahead, Briggs and the escort stopped at the next tent and Alilat went in alone. Briggs saw them and called the escort to attention in his loud brassy voice. Morgan winced.

'It's all right. Stand them easy.'

He walked past the tent with Ward, and caught a glimpse of Father Darrel inside. There was a tiny table-altar with two candles on it. He saw the priest's tall shadow prance towards Alilat as the native bent to kneel. He tightened his lips, turned his head away quickly. He and Ward began to walk back to the marquee,

When the men came back Morgan said. 'You see that table in the corner? I've put a pen and paper on it.'

Alilat's eyes focussed on him.

'I cannot write, Bwana.'

'Oh! Well, you'd better dictate it, then. Here—'

'There is a man from my village, sir. He is a preacher. He knows my people.'

'Where is he? In the Teso lines?'

'Yes, effendi.'

'What's his name?'

The man told him. Morgan said to one of the askaris:

'Fetch him. Run! Upesi, man!' He turned to Briggs. 'Take his rifle, will you?' Briggs came forward and took the rifle; he said nothing, but permitted himself a look of disapproval.

The atmosphere in the tent settled down again to a clogged silence. The moth, baffled in its tactics of immediate approach, was now walking in a more wary fashion round the glass of the lamp. All those in the tent watched it: Ward, who had moved in a little from the table in the corner; Briggs, the unwanted rifle held correctly in the at-ease position, by the flap; Alilat and the second askari on the other side of the desk from Morgan. As though gifted with a certain sense of theatre, the moth suddenly turned quite fanatically vigorous, and, circling the glass at great speed, had almost reached the top when, for no apparent reason, it fell off. There was a sigh from someone in the tent; Morgan looked up, but he could not face it.

The moth had fallen on its back. It took its ease for a few moments, then began to flap its wings in an effort to regain its feet. It described a number of frantic circles on its back, and banged against the piece of paper. One wing caught under the edge, and the moth righted itself slowly, leaving a little smudge of silver-grey dust on the margin. It sidled across the surface of the paper, then hesitated, waving its feelers. It turned abruptly and marched in a determined line back to the lamp, and, climbing the metal base, reached the glass and recommenced its spirals. This time it did not falter. When it reached the top it projected its head inquisitively over the rim. Morgan put up his hand to stop it, but he was not in time. The feelers curled up backwards from the heat till they were like scrolls of exquisite filigree-work. They glowed red and the moth jerked away and lost its balance. On its back next to the metal base, it moved its legs slowly, and Morgan brushed it off the desk and trod on it.

When he looked up from the sand, the native preacher was in the tent. He was a little thin man, a Reader of the Church Mission Society, and, though badly puffed from his run, he managed to maintain a pert appearance. His crimped hair was like a parodied permanent-wave; it was divided in the centre by the very exact parting shaven into it, and at the sides it jutted out past his head in short groomed wings.

'Good morning, sir,' he said, in English, enunciating the syllables carefully.

'You speak English, then?'

'Yes, sir, I speak English,' he replied with some dignity.

'The askari woke you?'

'Yes, sir.'

'No one in your lines knows he is to be shot today?'

'Pardon, sir?'

Morgan repeated the question more slowly.

'No, sir. No one knows.' For the first time, and with a slightly patronizing air, the Reader glanced at the uncomprehending Alilat.

'You're sure? Good', said Morgan in Swahili. 'He wants a letter written—has the askari told you? You can use that table. Take the lamp from the pole. And be quick.'

The Reader took the lamp and went to the corner with Alilat. He said something to him in Teso, and Alilat shrugged. The Reader turned round. He said, in English again:

'Excuse me, sir.'

'Yes? What is it?'

'We wish to pray.'

'Well, go ahead. Make it short. You haven't much time.' What the hell does he expect us to do, he thought, leave the tent? He looked at the two men, Protestant and Catholic, kneeling together, Alilat repeating the prayers in a low voice. Taking no chances, thought Morgan; but at once his remark annoyed him: he knew that seriously he somehow resented this entry of ecclesiastics; it seemed worse now that the one beside Alilat should be a man from his own village.

He heard Briggs begin to cough and try to control himself, and he glanced at him. The smothered coughs were blowing out his cheeks, but Briggs did not move at all and remained with his hands behind his back. When the spasms stopped at last he continued to gaze steadfastly at the opposite wall—he was waiting for orders, he was triumphantly aloof again. In this attitude he was impressive, and Morgan watched him for some time. It was a pity, he thought finally, but with a sense of satisfaction he could not quite understand, that on Brigg's squat military body the K.D. shorts seemed far too long, giving the broad freckled knees an absurd air of rustic modesty.

The two men in the corner got up and Alilat began to tell the Reader the distribution of his cattle, the messages for his family. The man translated aloud into Swahili as he wrote, making the small thoughts public and curiously unconvincing. His tongue worked laboriously between his lips in sympathy with his hand. Alilat waited patiently for him, and gave his next words at once, without repeating himself.

When the Reader had written a number of sentences he stopped and crossed out something. He hesitated a moment, then crumpled

the paper in his hand and threw it down on the ground. He took a fresh sheet.

Morgan let his breath out slowly. He looked at his watch; they were already late. He saw Ward smile at him uncertainly from the corner.

The two were quiet. Alilat turned.

'I am ready, Bwana.'

An orderly was standing inside the flap with three cups of coffee. He took one to Ward and brought the tray back to the desk. Morgan took his cup and said to Alilat: 'The other is for you.'

Alilat looked at him. He came forward and picked it up. Suddenly his face broke into a wide smile, and Morgan looked at it, astonished. Alilat said:

'Thank you, Bwana, thank you.'

He held the cup cautiously, as though he mistrusted it. He glanced in quick cunning at Ward and Morgan, and began to sip it slowly like them.

Morgan called Ward and went over to Briggs with him.

'I'll take him to the Rifle-Butts in my car with Briggs.'

'No escort, sir?' said Ward anxiously.

'No, you follow on with them in the next car. He'll be all right.'

The Reader was in the car with them, and once or twice Alilat gave him a fresh message, speaking in Swahili so that Morgan should understand. The Rifle-Butts were ahead of them, a little apart from the camp. The moon was fading now and the improbable pink of the desert dawn was in the sky and on the ground, so that all the world was quiet. The lines of the Butts lay accurately against the sky like a problem in geometry.

The cars stopped and the men got out. A party of British M.P.s, young, some shivering a little, were grouped near the Butts. In front of them, on blankets, were a dozen rifles. An M.O. was pacing up and down, his stethoscope jumping forward at each step. Morgan did not know him. He was glad that it was not Dawson.

He and Ward, with Alilat between them, began to walk. The Reader was a few yards behind them. By the post Alilat stumbled. He held onto the wood and smiled apologetically round at the two men. He stood up, and Ward turned him and began to tie his hands behind the post. Alilat winced. 'Must it be so tight, sir? Must they be tied at all?' and Morgan said: 'It is dasturi, a matter of custom,' and the man repeated, as though to himself, oh, it is dasturi, it is dasturi. But Morgan talked to Ward and he began to fumble with the cords. After a moment he looked up and Morgan went round and helped him so that they were tied loosely. Then he lifted the pillowcase to the man's head and Alilat spoke again 'Is it necessary, Bwana? I do not need it,' and he answered again, 'It is a matter of custom.' He adjusted the bag so that the other could breathe freely. He said: 'Keep talking, Alilat, to your friend the Reader.' He

pinned on the aiming-mark as the man said 'You will remember the three heifers for my uncle—'

The men shot. The body slid down gently to the sand, one leg straight out, the other bent up underneath, as though in a P.T. exercise. The M.O. went to him with his stethoscope. 'Not dead yet—not dead yet—not dead yet—' and though he said it only three times it was heavy and monotonous as the beat of a great clock. Ward went over with his Webley. The doctor stood back, and Morgan could see the body again. The pillowslip had come away, and the eyes were still open, looking towards him, a little puzzled. Then there was the shock of the Webley and Morgan had not looked away in time. He began to walk back to his car. He heard Briggs' voice: 'Unload. Pick up Empties.'

THE ESSENTIAL MOMENT

Like friends moving without impatience
to the expected meeting, the far-off trains
with slow white plumes converge,
threading the perspective of the summer plain;

stand stationary a moment; after casual
greeting seem to draw indifferently
apart, intent upon a known destination
beyond the horizon of the straining eve.

Pregnant perhaps with salty tears,
or sweet with thirsty kiss of lovers
denied by the war-wounded years,
the brief moment's encounter passes.

The moment is all—for all else lies
in the waste of time; but in the visionary eye
the morning splendour of cumulus upreared
builds the sulphurous towers of the storm;

the dazzling darkness of thunder falls
with spring rhythm of leaping waters,
the loud laughter of the sweeping hills.
Sunburnt harvest spells the first

green ripple of spring and the sacrament
of bread—illumination of the manifold
and gorgeous universe itself implied
in the bright vision of the essential moment.

ROBIN ATTHILL.